4 Moro rebels slain in South; MILF denies terror ties

STORY ON PAGE A2

Estrada lawyers not totally out

By Raul J. Palabrica

THE ORIGINAL members of former President Joseph Estrada's defense panel may have withdrawn from his case but three of them will be present in spirit to make sure his interests are protected.

ESTRADA/A20

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WHAT'S INSIDE

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- **Clash over Cha-cha looms** ACROSS / A14
- **No pro-Erap mobilization** METRO / A25

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Monday, March 4, 2002 ★ ~~76~~ 74 pages / 7 sections / vol.17 / no. 86 P15

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'Exile to ruin democracy'

FVR: We'll be seen as wishy-washy with no moorings in justice

By Donna S. Cueto, Rocky Nazareno and Christine Avendaño

DON'T panic and don't give in to calls to send ousted President Joseph Estrada into exile.

Former President Fidel Ramos gave the unsolicited advice to leaders of the three branches of government and of civil society as he warned them that giving in to calls for an Estrada exile would "destroy our credibility as a democracy."

"We will be seen as a wishy-washy country with no firm moorings in democracy, justice and fair play," Ramos told reporters yesterday before flying to Jakarta.

Press Undersecretary Manuel Sanchez, however, said letting Estrada leave the country could be the "practical and pragmatic solution."

"But that's up for the Sandiganbayan," Sanchez said on radio station dzMM, reiterating Malacañang's line that it's only the anti-graft court that can decide on the matter.

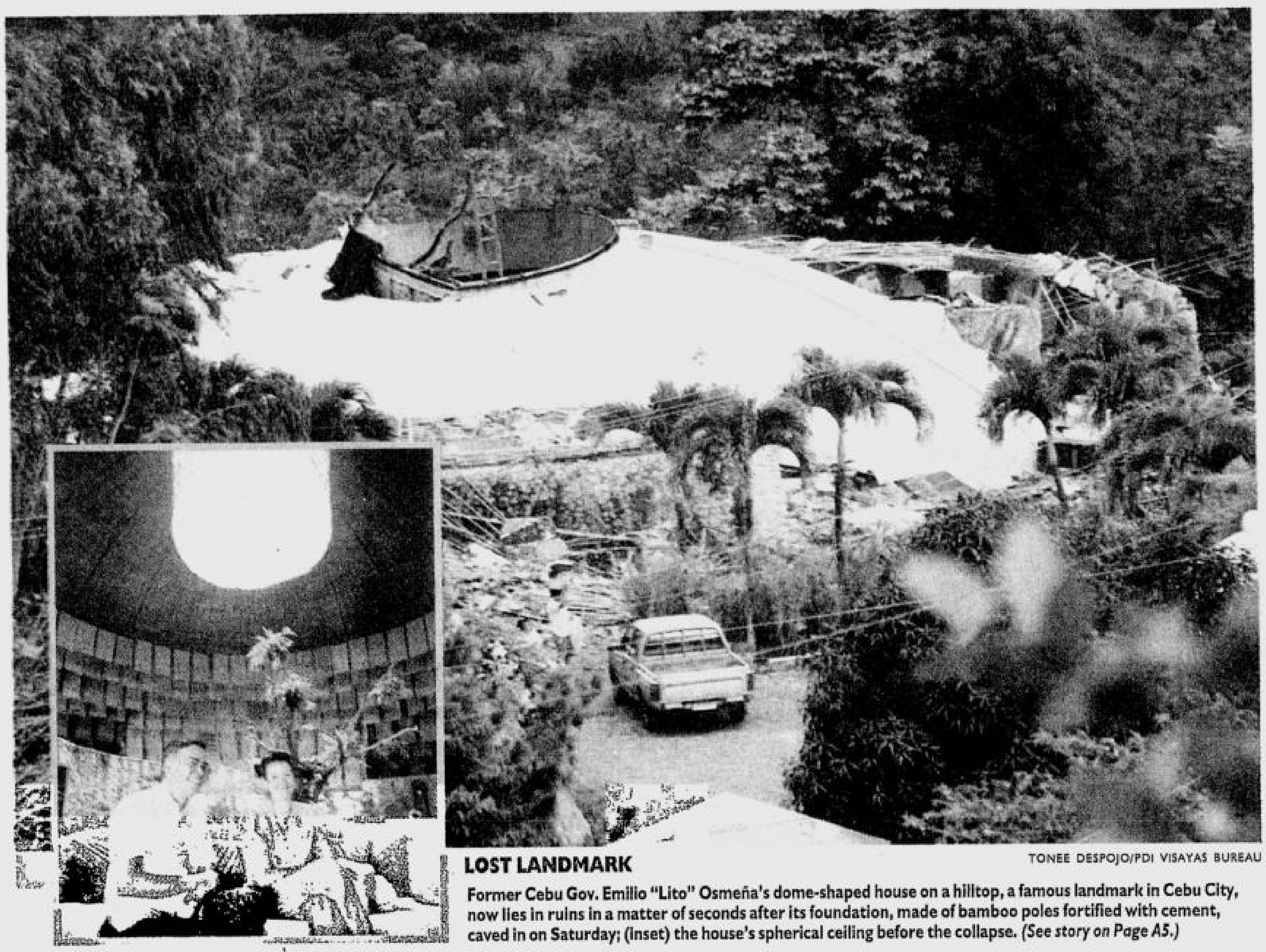
Ramos said Estrada should stay in the country and "face the courts because of the uncompleted impeachment process that led to his ouster."

"That process must be seen to its logical end and, hopefully, this will lead to a just and expeditious process with justice for all, including Mr. Estrada," he said.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said there was a "concerted effort" to free Estrada from detention.

He said the unanimous vote of Metro Manila mayors for allowing Estrada to leave and the separate resolutions in the House of Representatives and Senate seeking permission for Estrada's departure were part of this effort.

EXILE/A20



TONEE DESPOJO/PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

LOST LANDMARK

Former Cebu Gov. Emilio "Lito" Osmeña's dome-shaped house on a hilltop, a famous landmark in Cebu City, now lies in ruins in a matter of seconds after its foundation, made of bamboo poles fortified with cement, caved in on Saturday; (inset) the house's spherical ceiling before the collapse. *(See story on Page A5.)*

Erap bets it all in one reckless political gamble

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

BY DISMISSING his defense lawyers, deposed President Joseph Estrada has triggered an orchestrated move to wrench the criminal cases against him out of the judicial system and funnel them to the streets for a political solution.

The move represents Estrada's last hurrah, a desperate act to preempt the Sandiganbayan from rendering a decision on charges of plunder, corruption, perjury and illegal use of alias against him.

It further denotes a return to the politics of the streets after Estrada and his lawyers have viciously attacked the Sandiganbayan and the Supreme Court for allegedly having been "politicized" in their rulings in connection with the cases.

What Estrada and his lawyers mean is that the courts are "politicized" because they have rendered a series of decisions and rulings unfavorable to him.

Had the decisions been favorable to him, I am certain they would have praised the courts to high heavens for their "independence" and devotion to the rule of law and due process.

Estrada and his lawyers are sore losers. Because the courts have thrashed all their delaying tactics that have made a mockery of the notion of speedy trial, the lawyers are now saying that Estrada cannot expect a fair trial and that he is being rushed into being convicted.

By attacking the integrity of the judicial system and throwing the cases to the howling mob for judgment, his innocence or guilt of the charges will remain unresolved.

He is merely evading a judicial judgment, as he had evaded a decision by the impeachment court when his cohorts in the Senate prevented the opening of the second envelope containing vital evidence on the unexplained wealth charges.

Estrada's rejection of the judicial system has the immediate effect of further delaying the trial in the Sandiganbayan because the new set of court-appointed defense attorneys needs time to be familiar with the cases.

It buys time for Estrada, but this time

ERAP/A20

Ateneo wins Inquirer debate grand finals

By Leila Salaverria

IN THE end, hard work and a bit of luck spelled the difference.

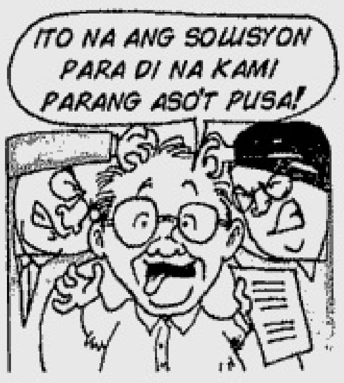
Two teams from the Ateneo de Manila University faced off in the grand finals of the five-day INQUIRER InterCollegiate Debating Championship held Tuesday under the auspices of the UP Debate Society at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

Under the Asian Parliamentary format, the opposing teams were handed the topic, "The RP press is way too chummy with the RP state," only a few minutes before the match.

The Ateneo team, which defended the affirmative side, emerged victorious. The team was made up of Madeline Dy, 19, a Management Engineering major, John Fajardo, 20, an Economics major, and Jess Lopez, 18, a Management Economics major.

"When you work hard for something, you're going to get it. We all worked hard for this. But I guess we

ATENEO/A6



ITO NA ANG SOLUSYON PARA DI NA KAMI PARANG ASO'T PUSA!

Election body drafts 'rules of engagement'

By Blanche S. Rivera

IT is not yet a ceasefire agreement. It is more like a set of rules of engagement, guidelines to govern the conduct of two hostile forces.

The forces at war, however, are not soldiers armed to the teeth but the seven members of the Commission on Elections.

In an attempt "to maintain

ELECTION/A19

Mission helps patients 'face' brighter future

By Volt Contreras

THE ONLY birthday present Meriza Ruth Sanga received came four days after she turned a year old on Feb. 22. But the belated gift for this child of a poor couple from Biñan, Laguna, was enough to ensure that she would "face" a brighter future.

Sanga made it as one of thousands of children around the country who had their cleft lips, cleft palates and other facial deformities repaired—and their lives uplifted—thanks to "Operation Smile," a volunteer medical mission now on its 20th year.

OS International founders, Dr. William Magee and his wife Kathy, a nurse, found it only fitting to mark the anniversary here in the country—the mission's place of birth.

The American couple, based in Norfolk, Virginia, led the first OS mission to Naga City in Camarines Sur in 1982, treating 50 patients.

Two decades later, the mission has been able to treat some 20,000 chil-

MISSION/A6

YEAR-OLD Meriza Ruth Sanga finds comfort on mother's shoulder after surgery.

ROMY HUMILLADA

Salarda case: New face of spouse abuse

By Lina Sagaral Reyes
Contributor

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Compared to Ma. Teresa Carlson, town girl Zenona Salarda was a virtual nobody.

"Si Ako" was an actress, ex-beauty queen and wife to an influential politician. "Monang," before her death at 45, was jobless, an outcast from her family, and rejected by her live-in partner of seven years.

Only in the gory manner of her death could Salarda rival Carlson as the new face of domestic violence.

For while Carlson took a leap of death, Salarda achieved post-mortem media attention as the local "chop-chop" lady, her body parts found in a hollow hole in a coconut farm in Villanueva town a week ago.

Her torso was almost totally burned but for the shapely legs, testimony to her former days as a majorette of the Sugbong Cogon town band.

Her best friend was sure it was the body of her colleague and confidante who had been missing for two days when she saw the three rings recovered by National Bureau of Investigation agents.

Monang liked jewelry and had a collection of rings and bracelets and necklaces, but over the years, most had been pawned or sold in exchange for daily needs like food, water, light, the children's school allowance.

Monang was a nurturing stepmother to her lover's two sons; despite their separation almost a year ago, the children refused to leave her.

Of the many rings, she managed to keep three gold ones crowned with heart-shaped buttons made from melted antique coins. In the end, the rings redeemed her from almost total

SALARDA/A20

Second FRONT PAGE

DI DAW SILA KA-TROPA NI OSAMA!

4 rebels slain; MILF denies terror ties

ZAMBOANGA—Four Muslim separatist rebels have been killed in a clash with government soldiers in Lanao del Sur, the military said yesterday.

Members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front attacked a remote farming village in the Central Mindanao province on Saturday and engaged responding army troops in a gunbattle, said Southern Command spokesperson Capt. Noel Detoyato.

"The troops repulsed the attack and engaged the rebels in a running gunbattle," Detoyato said, "slaying four MILF renegades in the encounter."

A pursuit operation was launched, he said, after the rebels headed toward a thickly forested hinterland area. Detoyato did not say what happened to the bodies of the slain guerrillas.

The 12,500-strong MILF is the country's main insurgent group currently negotiating a peace agreement with the government, but security experts have linked the group to Indonesian terror suspect Fathur Rahman al-Ghozi, who is now in detention in Manila.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu on Sunday denied the connection, saying it was "part of a grand design to have us labeled as terrorists."

Al-Ghozi was arrested by Philippine authorities on Jan. 15, leading to the discovery of a cache of explosives hidden in General Santos City in Mindanao that was apparently to be used in bombing attacks in other Southeast Asian countries.

Al-Ghozi is alleged to be a key member of Jemaah Islamiyah, a militant Islamic group in the Southeast Asia region which reportedly has ties to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terror network.

Prosecutors said al-Ghozi had also admitted to plotting with the MILF the deadly bombing attacks in Metro Manila on Dec. 30, 2000, in which more than a dozen people were killed.

But Kabalu said that MILF leader Hashim Salamat "is a moderate man," who would not sanction attacks against civilian targets.

He accused certain personalities in the Macapagal administration and within the military establishment of creating a scenario in order to scuttle the peace talks now going on and justify resuming offensives against the MILF.

"We do not have links to Jemaah Islamiyah or to al-Qaida, but we cannot speak for other groups in the southern Philippines like the Abu Sayyaf," Kabalu told Agence France Presse, referring to the kidnap gang that is now the subject of joint US-Philippine military operations in Mindanao.

"We have been expecting this—that they will try to label us as terrorists. These are provocative statements and they are hoping that if we are provoked, our efforts at solving the problem in the south will go down the drain," Kabalu said.

In yesterday's INQUIRER, al-Ghozi was reported to have also claimed that a top al-Qaida leader was in Manila in December 2000 when the Rizal Day bombings were planned and executed.

Al-Ghozi allegedly identified the suspected terrorist as Riduan Isamuddin, 36, a radical Muslim preacher also known as Hambali.

Al-Ghozi's allegations turned the Department of Justice's focus on the Jemaah Islamiyah, which is considered the al-Qaida network in Southeast Asia.

The Indonesian-born and Islamic-schooled Isamuddin had been tagged by Malaysian authorities as the principal JI operative in Southeast Asia.

The arrest of al-Ghozi, reputedly an explosives expert, led to the seizure of a ton of TNT, 17 M-16 rifles, 300 detonators and other bomb-making apparatus in a house he rented in General Santos City. The cache of explosives was capable of leveling a block of buildings, officials had said.

AFP, with a report from Michael Lim Ubac

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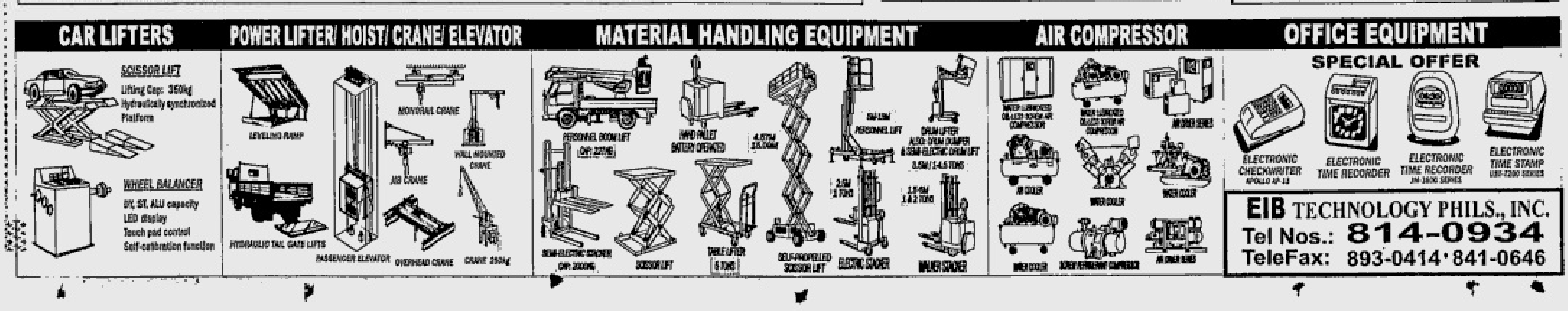

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For PNP chief, it's death for 15 grams of shabu

DAVAO CITY—Philippine National Police chief Leandro Mendoza considers "too high" the 99 grams of shabu that the Senate has proposed as the minimum number for imposing the death penalty on anyone caught in possession of the drug.

Mendoza said the PNP has instead proposed that anyone caught with 15 grams of shabu should be punished with lethal injection.

Mendoza, who was here last Friday for a National Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee meeting, said the PNP proposal was based on Singapore's policy on illegal drug traders and users.

"We welcome this approval in the Senate but I think it is still too high," he told reporters here.

Last week, 18 senators voted to pass a new dangerous drugs bill that would impose the death penalty on anyone caught with at least 99 grams of shabu, which is actually half of the 200 grams specified in the current Dangerous Drugs Act.

Mendoza said if the PNP's proposal were to be taken seriously by the legislators, "I'm sure we could have a good fight here against illegal drugs."

A special drug court judge here has also welcomed the passage of the Senate bill.

Judge Adoracion Avisado, who handles all drug cases here, said the passage of the bill was a good development since most shabu pushers and users pack shabu in small sachets.

But Avisado said the 99 grams should be reduced to 30 grams which she said was the usual volume found in the drug cases brought to her sala. ***Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Palace admits rescue imperiled by jockeying among military units

By Carlito Pablo

MALACANANG admitted yesterday the rescue of the hostages being held by the Abu Sayyaf might be jeopardized by the competition for recognition among the Philippine military units in Basilan.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, Armed Forces southern commander, "has been very well aware of such a risk," which was reported in the foreign media.

"As you would notice, he is almost always in Basilan to ensure that there is a unified command," said Tiglao of Cimatu, in a teleconference with Palace reporters.

The New York Times reported recently there was jockeying among Filipino units to be the first to get to the American missionary couple, Martin and Gracia Burnham, and Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap, who have been held for nine months by the Abu Sayyaf.

The newspaper also said the rescue operations were being hampered by the inexperience of Filipino soldiers in conducting night operations.

There are at least 5,000 Philippine Army, Marine and Scout Rangers on Basilan island, where the Abu Sayyaf are believed hiding with their hostages.

Tiglao declined to confirm reports the Burnhams had been sighted recently through the use of sophisticated surveillance equipment by US forces, who are training local troops under the joint Balikatan 02-1 military exercise.

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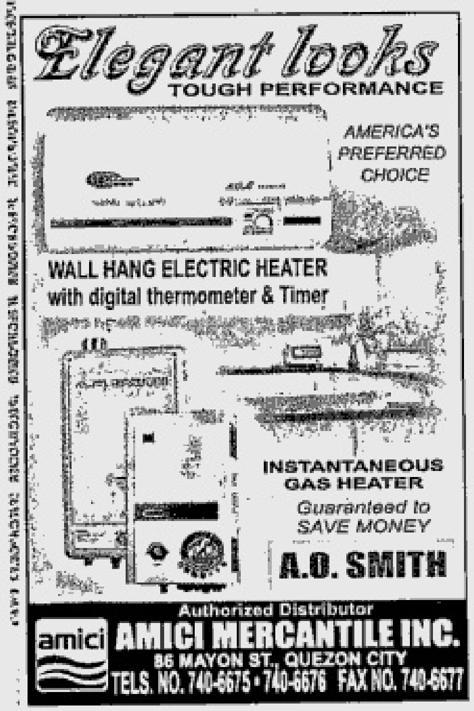

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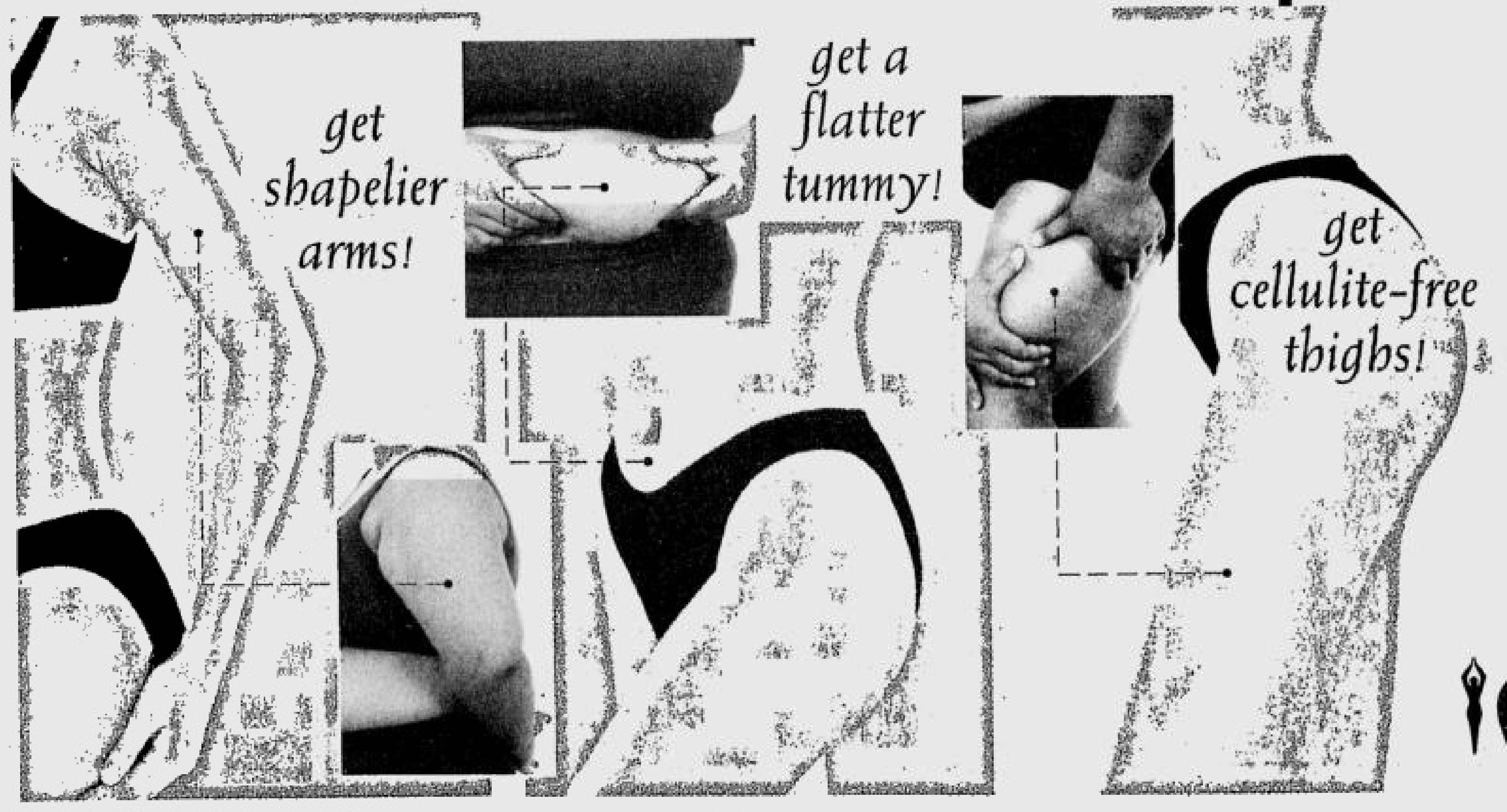
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GMA to keep Cabrera for 'a few more months'

Palace eyeing ex-Marikina mayor for DENR

By Carlito Pablo

OUTGOING Press Secretary Noel Cabrera will be staying on "for a few months more" until President Macapagal-Arroyo has found someone to replace him.

But Cabrera said he was not even aware of the President's decision to extend his term and had not discussed it with anyone, not least presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao who announced it yesterday.

"I thought I was supposed to be on leave," Cabrera said.

"I think Secretary Cabrera will follow the President's instructions," Tiglao said when asked whether Cabrera had been informed.

The confusion only highlighted what Palace insiders have said was the real reason for Cabrera's resignation.

Though Cabrera had cited "job burn-out" as the reason for his resignation, insiders said the self-effacing veteran newspaperman was being "left out of the loop" in the Palace.

Tiglao is reportedly one of those being considered for the post.

Ms Macapagal's private publicist Dante Ang has reportedly recommended INQUIRER publisher Isagani Yambot.

Other reports said the Palace was also considering Cerge Re-monde, chair of the sequestered Intercontinental Broadcasting Corp.

Press Undersecretary Roberto Capco, a former journalist and longtime media aide of Ms Macapagal, is also seen as a contender.

"I won't speculate on who would replace him (Cabrera) at this point," Tiglao said yesterday.

In another vexed Cabinet position, the President is reportedly mulling over a possible replacement for Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, who has been experiencing tough opposition at the congressional Commission on Appointments.

A Senate source said one of those being considered by the President is Bayani Fernando, the former mayor of Marikina.

The source said that Ms Macapagal has been consulting with some administration senators, asking if Fernando could be a viable replacement for Alvarez.

The source said the President was getting exasperated over Alvarez's confirmation process which could drag on for months because of the huge number of parties opposing it.

So far, 18 oppositors have filed manifestations with the 25-member CA to block Alvarez's confirmation and only two have been heard so far.

"That is not counting the congressmen and some senators who are vehemently opposing his appointment," the source added.

Fernando is reportedly being considered on the basis of his success in transforming the Marikina portion of the Pasig river into a hub of commerce and a recreation center. The area is dominated by the Riverbanks mall, which boasts restaurants and open-air bars, which had been constructed after the river was dredged and cleaned up. ***With a report from Rocky Nazareno***

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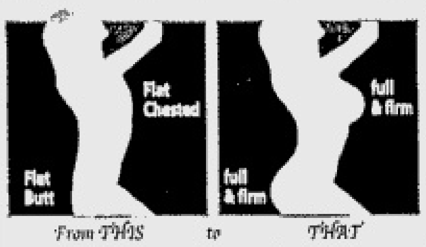

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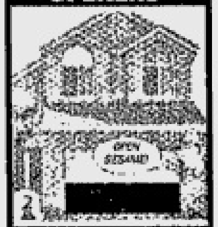

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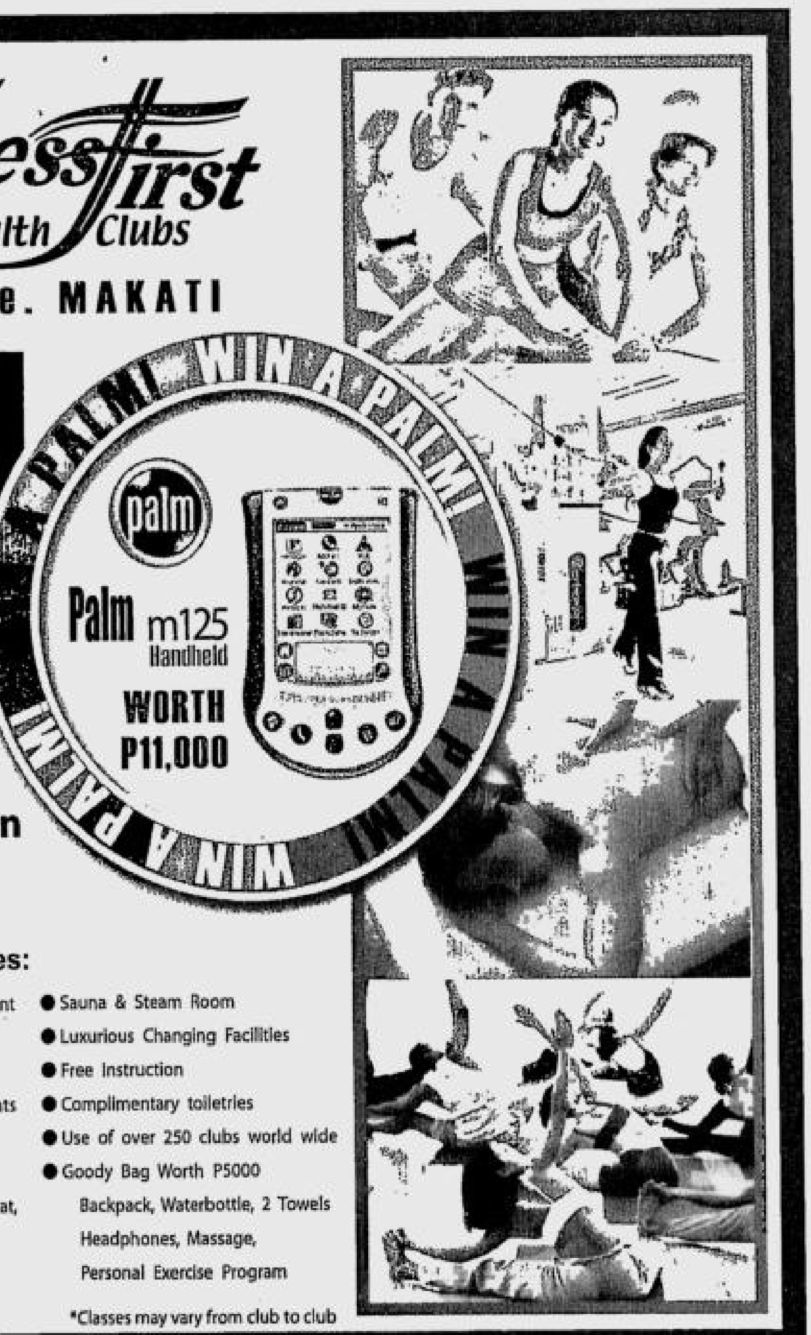

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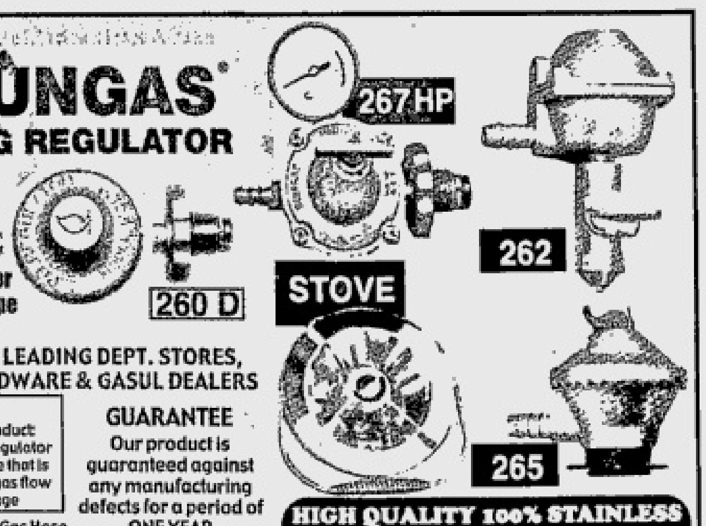

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Lito Osmeña's house on a hill, a Cebu City landmark, collapses

By Tonton Antogop
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Cebu lost a famous landmark when the unique circular house built on a hill by Emilio "Lito" Osmeña, the ex-governor, collapsed on Saturday.

The house, which was often mistaken for an observatory because of its spherical roof and silver paint, collapsed shortly before noon last Saturday after its foundation, made of bamboo poles fortified with cement, caved in.

No one was seriously hurt but a housemaid, who was in the bathroom at the maids' quarters, suffered minor injuries.

Osmeña and his wife Annette, who lived in the dome, happened to be at a nearby house where their children lived.

But they lost their pet poodle which was buried in the debris, said Milo, a son of Osmeña.

A former Osmeña aide said the pet dog was one of Mrs. Osmeña's favorites.

Built in 1986, the dome was reduced to rubble in a matter of seconds, witnesses said.

Osmeña said the house's bamboo foundation, which he had designed, may have deteriorated over the years.

Before the collapse, he had planned to fortify the foundation with steel and fiberglass, the former governor said.

"I was in the process of building it over. The jacking up (of the foundation) was still not finished. That's why it collapsed," he said.

But Lito and Annette Osmeña were hardly left homeless. They reportedly left for their forested estate in Southern Leyte yesterday.

The house was built on a hill in Barangay Busay, about 10 km from downtown Cebu City, at a cost of cost P800,000. It had a magnificent view of the city.

The dome was adjacent to the Top's, a view deck with a restaurant, also belonging to Osmeña, which is a popular tourist destination as it offers a 360-degree view of metropolitan Cebu.

Cebu City Administrator Nigel Paul Villarete, a civil engineer and urban planner who had visited the Osmeña residence several times, said the collapse did not surprise him as "bamboo is not a regular structural material."

Malaysia extradites Filipino fugitive

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysian police have extradited a fugitive wanted on charges of murder and rape in the Philippines, Philippine Ambassador Jose Brillantes said Sunday.

"Both sides made a symbolic transfer on Friday but the physical handing over of the fugitive to the Philippine authorities was on Saturday," Brillantes said.

"I have no confirmation yet but it is quite likely he has already been sent back to the Philippines, where he will face multiple charges," he said.

Noel Nericueco, who is wanted for a series of murders, swindles and rapes in the Philippines, was arrested by Malaysian police last month in northern Penang state.

Nericueco, 39, who aside from using a forged Thai passport to enter the country, was linked to six fraud cases involving more than $131,580 in the past two years, deputy chief of the Criminal Investigation Department, Musa Hassan said.

Hassan was quoted by the Sunday Star as saying Nericueco was handed over to the Philippine authorities for breaking immigration laws here.

Nericueco is the alleged leader of a gang that Philippine authorities say carried out several contract killings in the past decade. He fled the Philippines several years ago. *AFP*

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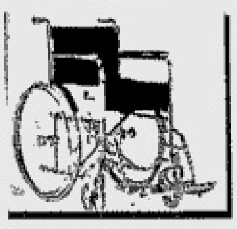
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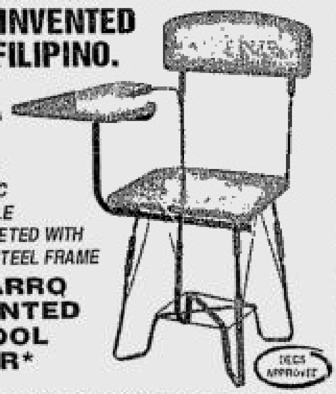
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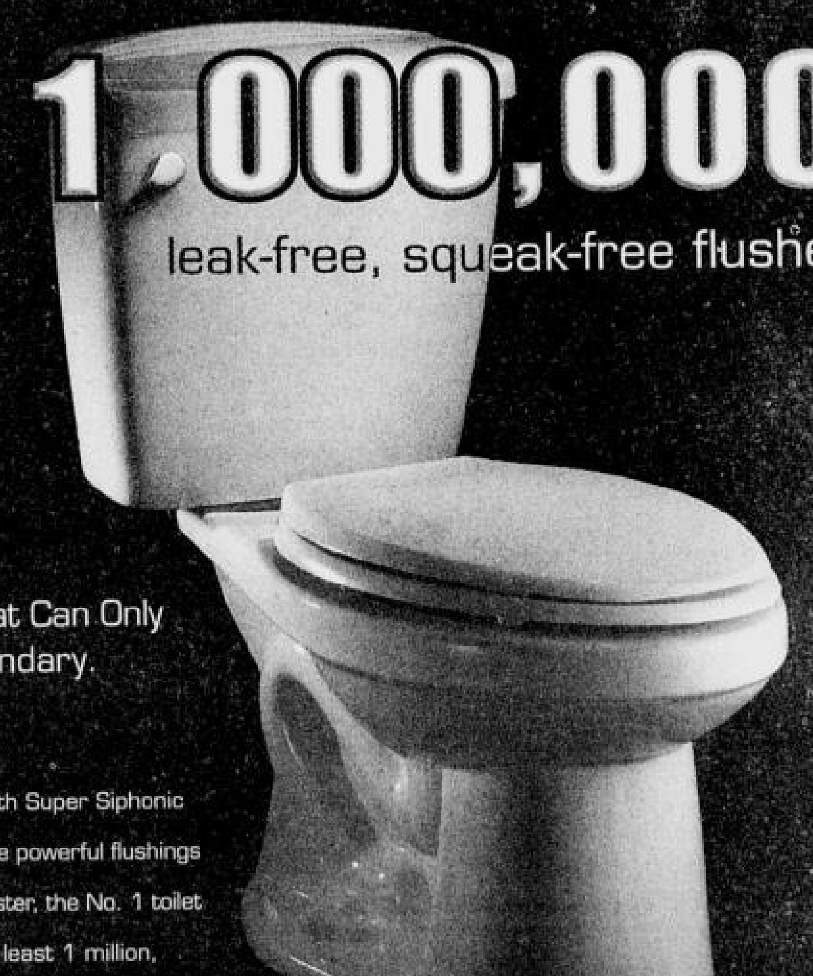
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Mission helps patients 'face' brighter future

From page A1

dren in 20 countries around the world, 12,000 of them in 21 areas in the Philippines.

"There is only one language the world truly understands—the child. Everybody understands a child, regardless of color, race, religion," enthused Magee at the media launch of the 2002 Philippine leg of the mission on Feb. 26 in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Bringing life

"Operation Smile is not just about repairing a face. It's a metaphor for bringing life to death in 45 minutes," said Magee, whose charitable work in the country now spans the terms of five Philippine presidents.

Several rooms away at the Dr. Jose P. Rizal National Medical Research Center, a team of Filipino and foreign surgeons, pediatricians, anesthesiologists, dentists, nurses and speech therapists delicately attended to their young patients, some of whom like the Sanga family hailed from outside Cavite.

Meriza's mother Veneriza, 29, said it would have cost about P18,000 if her daughter got the same operation for her cleft lips at a private hospital in Laguna. (A cleft palate operation can cost up to P25,000.)

Veneriza, who is married to a construction worker, said such sum was practically impossible for them to come by. She has another child to feed.

"That's why the moment I heard something like this was being offered here, I immediately seized the opportunity," she said.

Veneriza said she was depressed when she saw Meriza come to this world with cleft lips.

"Now, to think we could not even afford to throw a party for her on her birthday, this gift is more than enough," Veneriza said as she rocked her daughter in her arms, a blood-stained gauze patched on the child's mouth.

Aside from Cavite, Operation Smile missions in the country this year were held at the Bicol Medical Center in Naga, Vicente Sotto Memorial Center in Cebu City, and Brokenshire Memorial Medical Hospital in Davao City.

The volunteers were expected to treat as many as 150 patients per mission site.

Around 90 international medical workers have arrived from the United States, with Filipino team leaders from the Philippine Association of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons.

With them are tons of medical supplies and equipment, and a treasure chest of history and personal anecdotes.

Jegit Inciong, one of the participating Filipino surgeons, has been joining OS missions since finishing his medical residency in 1995.

Speechless, teary eyed

"The fulfillment comes in seeing the mother's face the moment you return the child to her after the operation. They usually turn speechless, teary eyed. They would even ask in jest: 'Is that my child?' That's what keeps me coming back to this mission," he told the INQUIRER.

Inciong said he had since been taking timeout from his work at a private hospital in Manila and at the University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital, where he is a clinical associate professor, to devote a few weeks to the mission here and abroad.

Operation Smile held its 20th anniversary program on Saturday night at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on Roxas Boulevard in Pasay City.

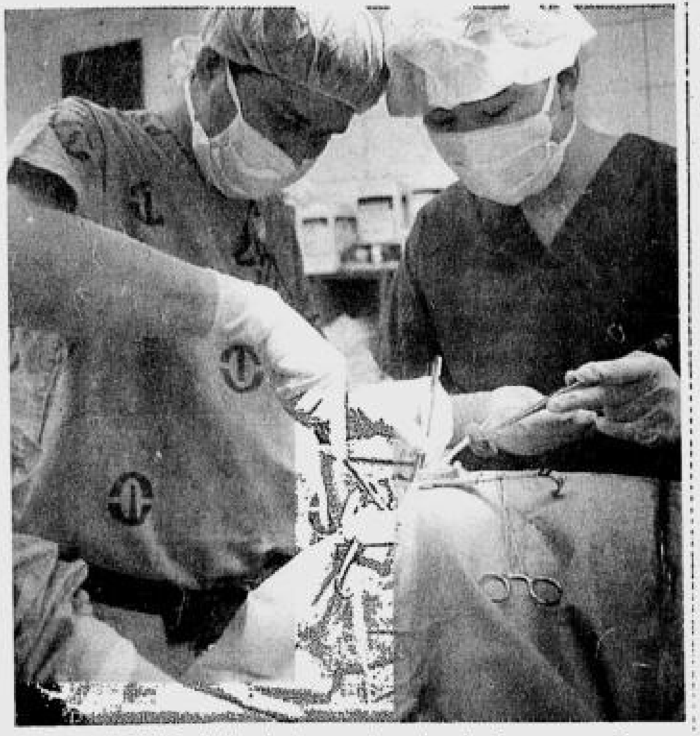
In their anniversary message, the Magee couple said this year's Philippine mission "represents our past, present and future helping children of correctable facial deformities."

"Our friends in the Philippines have helped us change the lives of thousands of children, and we owe much of our success to the dedicated volunteers in this country," they said.

Edith Villanueva, president of OS Philippines, said every mission in the country had become more efficient and organized due to a permanent local OS office and full-time secretariat, a growing network of volunteers, and a reliable stream of sponsors.

Self-confident

Two OS patients from Iloilo, former recluses who now brim with self-confidence and pride in their successful enterprises and careers, came out with written testimonies of how the mission turned their lives 180 degrees.



"OPERATION Smile" volunteers at work: plastic surgeon Dr. Dale Raymund Abraham and surgical resident Dr. Nathaniel Chan.

ROMY HOMILLADA

At 23, Lorelei Oquila already owns a small business, a desktop computer center, yet she spent the first 18 years of her life in "fear of being ridiculed" because of her inborn cleft lip and palate.

Although her lip was repaired when she was still a child, she grew up with her palate still deformed. In class, Oquila recalled, she was always too shy to participate in recitations although "my mind would leap to express my thoughts."

Even simple acts like verbally giving directions to jeepney drivers became a test of nerves for her.

Until an OS mission in Bacolod in 1997 finally allowed the self-effacing girl to pursue her bright ideas and plans in life.

Her improved speech—and restored spirit—enabled her not only to finish a two-year computer course at an AMA computer school but also to be named the "Best Artisan of the Year" in her class.

Yet old habits die hard, she wrote with amusement. "Sometimes I still catch myself covering my lips or reaching for a pen to communicate," she said.

Edison Silla recalled growing an 8-lb tumor on the floor of his mouth that caused his chin to develop a "melon-like mass" hanging down his chest, shortly after finishing college.

"Mine became an awful-looking face inviting both pity and distaste," he said. He had to wear an oversized bandana to cover the lower part of his face and his chest when going outdoors.

He also refused visits from family and friends.

Hope came when he applied for treatment at an OS mission in Bacolod in 1992. Seeing the gravity of his condition, volunteer doctors decided to operate on him in the United States, where kind-hearted Fil-Ams adopted him during his treatment.

No less than Magee himself performed the 12-hour procedure.

Today, Silla teaches Social Studies at the Olon National High School. "I cannot repay what OS has done for me: the values of generosity, concern, and most of all, love, which are human qualities that cut across nations."

Inquirer
InterCollegiate
Debating Champions

MEMBERS of the Ateneo de Manila University debating team raise their trophies after winning the INQUIRER InterCollegiate Debating Championship. INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez (center) looks on.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Ateneo . . .

From page A1

were also lucky," Dy said after she and her two colleagues bested the team made up of James Bitanga, Wilfred Segovia and Eleanor Uy.

The winning Ateneo team will represent the Philippines in the 9th All-Asian Inter-Varsity Debating Championship to be held in Thailand in May. Its P25,000 prize will be used to pay for the $160 registration fee in the tournament. Last year's winner in the All-Asian championship was the contingent from UP Diliman.

Shortly after the grand finals, the INQUIRER hosted a dinner at the UP Bahay ng Alumni for the tournament's participants—300 students from 20 colleges and universities nationwide.

"I hope the insights you have gained in the event have inspired you to explore your potential," INQUIRER president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez told the young debaters.

She explained the INQUIRER's thrust to promote reading among the youth. "The road to knowledge begins with the turn of a page."

At the same time, she reminded them of the importance of communication. "It is communication that turns this knowledge into something useful and exciting."

Other participants displayed their communication skills when they took part in the public speaking contest also held on Tuesday.

Eight debaters regaled the crowd with five-minute speeches on such topics as "Why Harry Potter is detrimental to your health," "Debaters are evil in nature," and "Madonna is a debate icon."

But it was Ateneo student Marlon Plaza who romped off with a trophy for his speech on the topic, "Why UP Diliman is the best place to be."

Also handed out during the dinner were "special awards," for the "crush *ng bayan*," "best couple," "boy band material," "Ms Congeniality," and "most likely to be the Philippine president."

Fajardo and Lopez, two of the champions said one of the things they liked most about the championship was the camaraderie it had fostered among the students.

"The best part is being with students from other schools and meeting new friends," they said.

For her part, UP Debate Society president Regina Ozoa said she hoped a similar debate would be held next year.

Other teams who made it to the quarterfinals were four teams from UP Diliman, two from Ateneo, and one each from the De La Salle University and the Far Eastern University.

Adjudged best speakers were John Fajardo, Madeline Dy, Jess Lopez, James Bitanga, Pamela Manuel, Wilfred Segovia, Iyan Adewuya, Eleanor Uy, Carl Ng, Marlon Plaza.

The best adjudicators were Brian Duruin, Jackie Espenilla, Annabelle Mercado, Patricia Baking and Cynthia Diaz.

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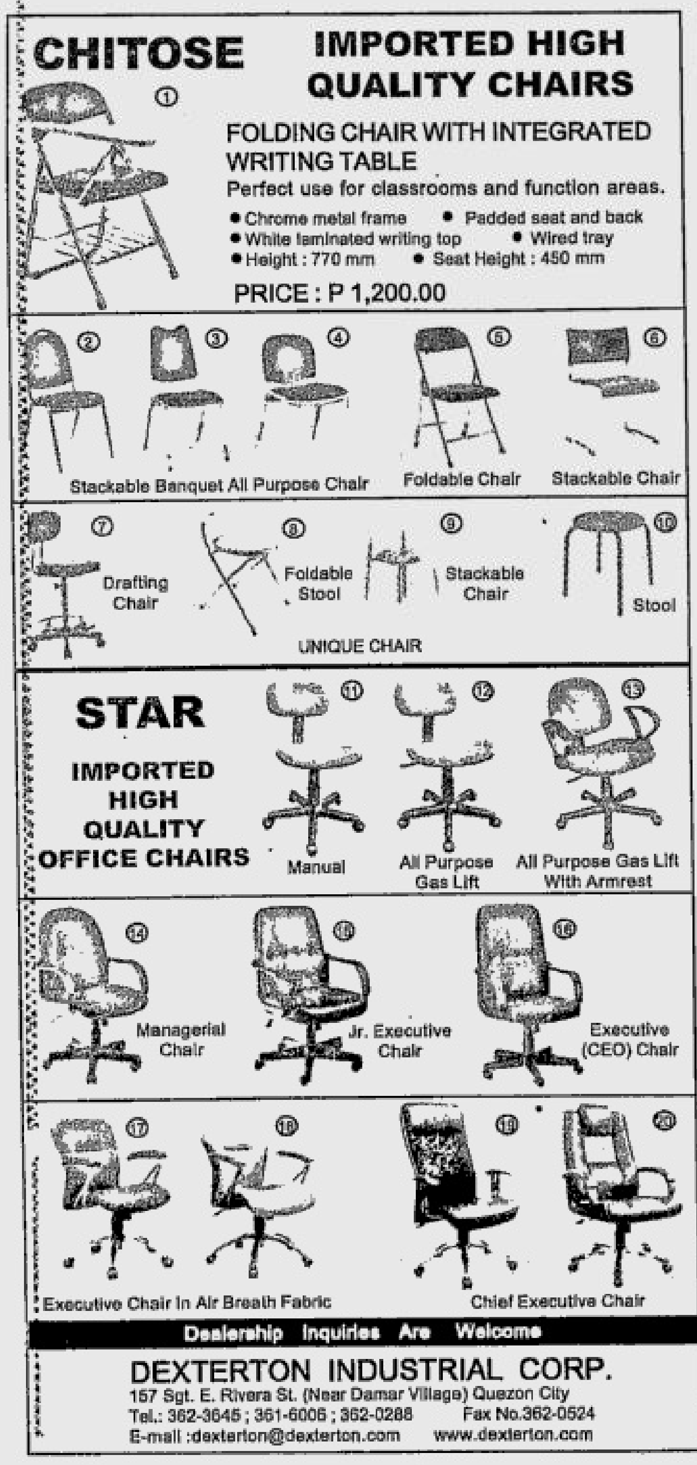

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, March 4, 2002
3rd Week of Lent
1st Reading: **2 K 5:1-15**
Gospel: **Lk 4:24-30**

When Jesus had come to Nazareth, he said to the people in the synagogue, "No prophet is honored in his own country. Truly, I say to you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens withheld rain for three years and six months and a great famine came over the whole land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow of Zarephath, in the country of Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha, the prophet, and no one was healed except Naaman, the Syrian."

On hearing these words, the whole assembly became indignant. They rose up and brought him out of the town, to the edge of the hill on which Nazareth is built, intending to throw him down the cliff. But he passed through their midst and went his way.

Commentary

Today's gospel is about appreciating what's right in front of us.

"To go to Rome
Is endless trouble, needless pain.
The Master whom you seek in Rome
You find at home
Or seek in vain."

At home tonight, forget the TV, and take a look at the person next to you.

"The person next to you is the greatest miracle and the greatest mystery that you will ever meet...

The person next to you is trying to become something in particular...

The person next to you has problems and fears, wonders how he or she is doing and often doesn't feel very good about it...

There is something her one life on earth means and cares for – but does she dare speak of it to you?"

(from "Look around you, friends" Henry L. Myers)

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Buddhists, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Jews pray for peace at Edsa

By Blanche S. Rivera

PEACE knows no religion, or should.

The Edsa Shrine, declared holy ground by the Vatican, has stood witness to people of all religions and social strata fighting for things that went beyond the four walls of a church.

Last week's 16th anniversary celebration of the Edsa revolt in 1986 was the first in a long time the shrine had played host to Buddhists, Jews, Catholics, Protestants and Muslims who came together to bow their heads in prayer, united in cause.

The famous shrine at the corner of Edsa and Ortigas Avenue had become once again a place of unity for people of peace.

Bishop Soc Villegas, the shrine's parish priest, had said he wanted the church to be a place that's "open to everybody," regardless of religion, color, age and social standing.

Villegas led around 100 Catholics, Jews, Buddhists, Muslims and Protestants in the interfaith fellowship on Feb. 25 that started at 6 p.m.

The Buddhists were represented by Venerable Master Yung Guang, head abbess of the Guang Shan Temple, while Prof. Taha Basman, secretary general of the Philippine Islamic Council, led the Muslims.

The Protestants were represented by Rey Reyes, head of the National Council of Churches of the Philippines, and people of the Jewish faith by Asher Goffer, who read a message from Rabbi Attias Shalomon, chief rabbi in Manila.

But while they had come together to pray, the members of the different religions still did so in separate rooms.

The Jews took the nun's quarters for their place of prayer, while the Catholics took the adoration chapel. The Protestants, Buddhists and Muslims each took separate rooms to say their prayers.

Still, "it was a celebration of faith and prayer," said Fr. Ramil Marco, director for interfaith affairs.

Marco said it was the first time the interfaith prayer fellowship was officially included in the annual celebration of the Edsa I revolt that toppled the Marcos dictatorship since the administration of President Joseph Estrada.

The various denominations agreed to pray for peace amid the country's problems with secessionist and terrorist groups.

"The national leadership, in tandem with civil society, should muster all available resources and ingenuity to fight society's menace and work for the common good," said Basman in his message.

"This way, our people, irrespective of social status and religious affiliation, can participate in nation-building as partners, not as burdens, as allies, not as enemies," Basman said.

The representative of each denomination delivered a message of peace at the shrine's altar before going into their own rooms to pray. A worship service led by the Edsa children's choir followed outside the church.

Other kids released white doves as symbols of the peace that they were praying for.

"Real peace cannot be achieved through the use of terror, coercion, intimidation, restriction and other means," said Buddhist Yung Guang.

"We must pay attention to purifying our minds and in understanding our thoughts," he said. "We must apply compassion, unity, magnanimity to promote peace."

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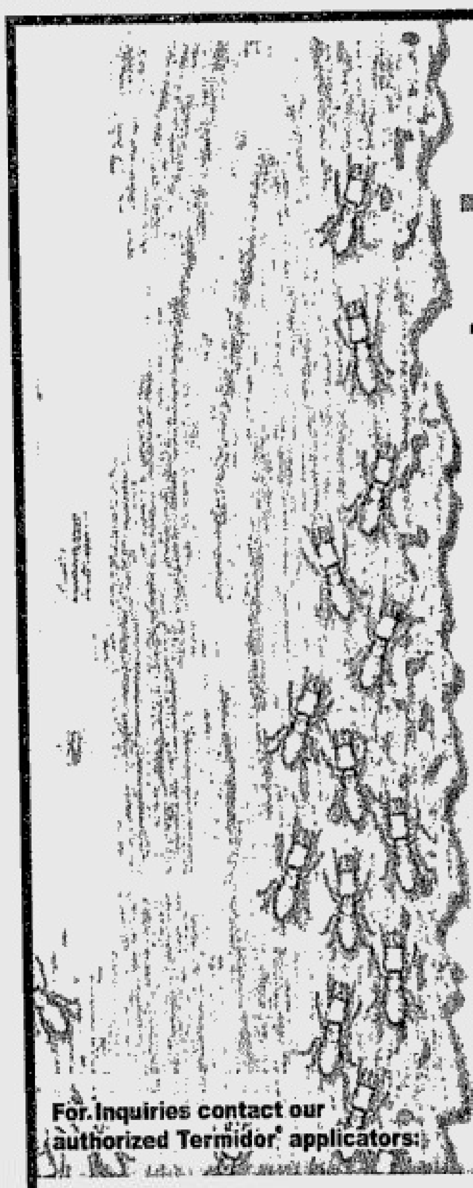

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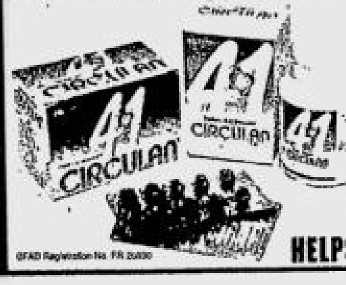

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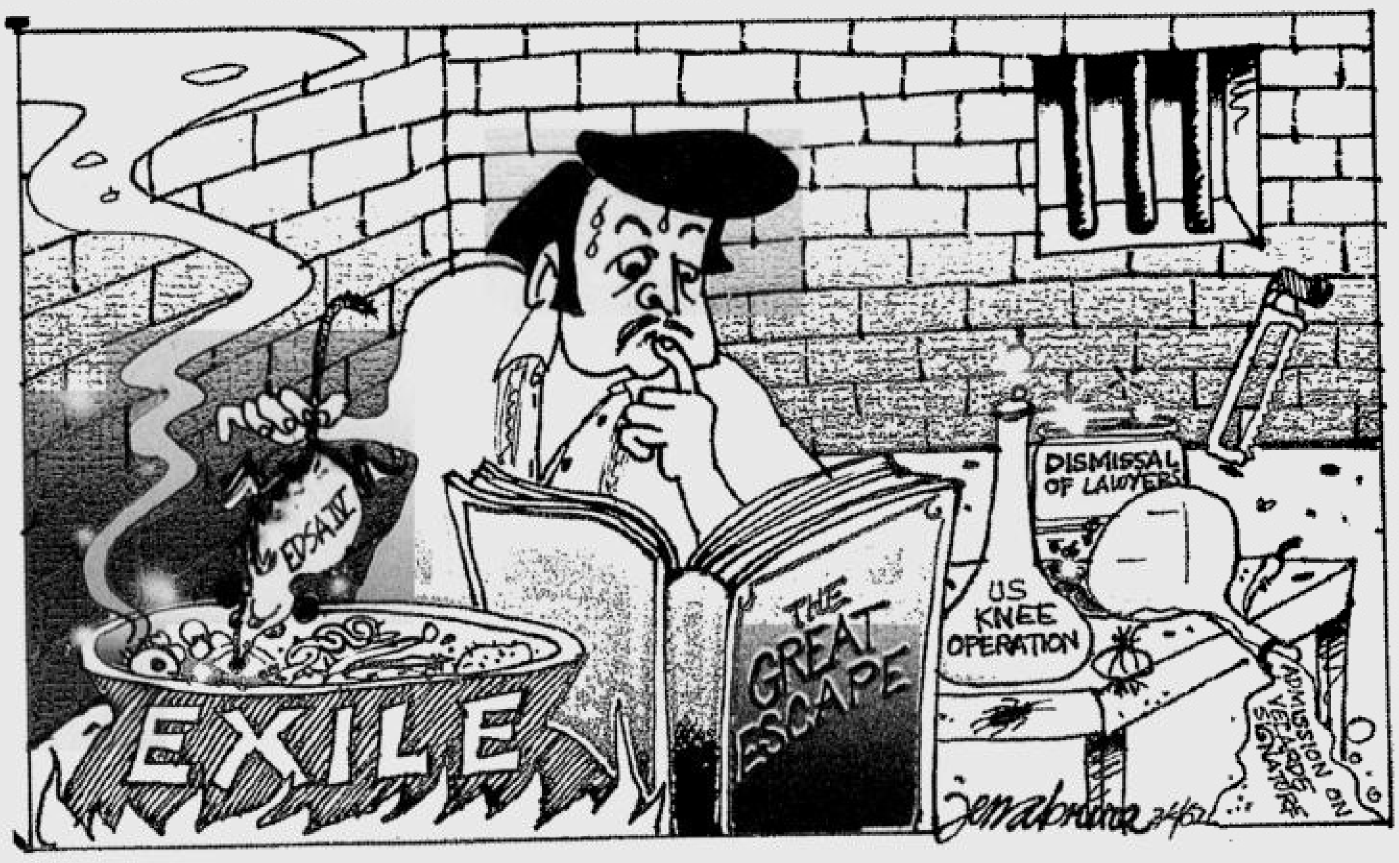

EDITORIALS

Good intentions

THE ROAD to political hell is paved with good intentions. Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. may sincerely believe that letting deposed President Joseph Estrada leave for medical treatment abroad will serve the country's best interests, but on this issue he is grievously mistaken. If, under pressure from government officials or restive sectors of the general public, the Sandiganbayan overturns its earlier ruling and allows Estrada to leave, we can be sure of one thing: there will be hell to pay.

Pimentel's bottom-line argument is that allowing Estrada to undergo knee surgery in the United States will "defuse the situation for the meantime." This is not an original idea, as the senator will be the first to admit. Speaker Jose de Venecia used identical reasoning to justify the controversial resolution urging the Sandiganbayan to allow Estrada's treatment abroad. Pimentel himself, during the uncertain days immediately before and after Estrada's ouster in January 2001, raised the possibility of exile as a way out of the impasse.

But time has overtaken this political solution. Contrary to Pimentel's claim last Saturday, it is already too late for an extra-judicial initiative. Estrada has already been arraigned in court, and the historic plunder trial is already underway. The only thing to do is to see the trial through.

The nation is at a momentous fork in the road. Proceeding with the trial is the difficult way to political maturity, the road less taken. Allowing Estrada to leave, however, is the road that has been smoothened with good intentions and political compromises. And—here is the essential point, on which our national self-respect depends—this particular road is nothing less than an expressway to exile, and hence an escape route from justice. How can we believe otherwise, when the actions of Estrada and his supporters in the past week have proven once more that they are capable of anything—even declaring war on the judiciary? If they can treat the country's courts with undisguised contempt, how can we put any faith in their oft-repeated promises to return?

If Estrada leaves, we can expect the following: an all-out attempt to destabilize the Macapagal administration and a concerted effort to ensure the victory of a pro-Estrada presidential candidate in 2004. But we should also expect dire consequences that go beyond short-term partisan goals. We should, for instance, expect a rapid erosion of the people's faith in independent courts and, by extension, the people's participation in democratic institutions. For a representative democracy twice renewed by the miracle of People Power, this is nothing less than a vision of political hell.

Bad faith

COUNT among Joseph Estrada's irresponsible supporters his erstwhile defense lawyers.

Instead of instructing him to restrain himself in his criticism of the Sandiganbayan—not only because he would be guilty of contempt of court but also because he would undermine the justice system itself—they have tried to outdo him.

Raymund Fortun criticized the anti-graft court's Special Division and the Supreme Court that created it for "railroading" the process. "All special courts are there not to render justice but have an element of vengeance," he said in a mix of English and Filipino. His use of logic is as strained as his syntax. Comparing the Special Division with the military commissions in place during martial law, for instance, he claimed that the verdict in the Estrada plunder trial was already preordained. This merely shows that his grasp of history is as loose as his respect for the truth. Are the country's courts, of which Fortun is an officer, truly laboring under a military regime, or under a system where decisions are dictated from the top?

Former senator Rene Saguisag finds no difference between South Africa's apartheid-era state of emergency and our present-day constitutional system. In his newspaper column last Friday, he even compared Estrada to freedom-fighter Nelson Mandela, because they both have "a roving eye" and are "human beings with human rights." This is an argument in bad faith, meant only to cloak Estrada with Mandela's respectability.

In these and other statements, Estrada's counsel have demonstrated a breathtaking contempt for the country's courts. It is time the judges returned the compliment.

Law partners inhibit selves from Jancom case

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

LAST Feb. 28 I wrote here about the P390-billion (correct, billion!) garbage contract with Jancom, a shadowy private corporation with a hard-to-locate address and which is being disowned by its mother company in Australia, Jancom International Pty. Ltd. Three Philippine presidents (Fidel V. Ramos, Joseph Estrada and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo) refused to sign the contract because it violates several laws and has many other defects. But the Supreme Court's Third Division ruled recently that the contract is valid and that if President Macapagal will only sign it, her signature will correct all the defects as if it were a magic wand.

"A meeting of the minds" of the contracting parties is sufficient to "cure" any of the contract's defects, said the decision penned by Associate Justice Jose A. R. Melo, who is retiring. (It may be just a coincidence, but the lower court judge who also decided in favor of Jancom was also retiring when he wrote his decision.)

In its decision, the tribunal set a dangerous precedent: that a signed contract is above any of the nation's pertinent laws that it may violate or has already violated. Thus, a contract may violate many national laws, like the Jancom contract, but once it is signed, it must be respected, never mind the violations.

For example, under the contract, Jancom will dispose of the garbage via incineration. This violates the Clean Air Act (Republic Act 8749) which bans incinerators, and the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (RA 9003). So how can you implement the contract without violating these two laws? "A meeting of the minds" of the contracting parties will cure that, said Justice Melo in his decision. I don't know how much "meeting of the minds" will make black white and a crooked line straight, but it has always been said that a smart lawyer can make black white and a crooked line straight. Justice Melo has proven that.

Who are these smart lawyers who weakened the eyes of Justice Melo? The coalition of NGOs in the Citizens National Network against Poverty and Corruption (CNN-APC) which is opposing the Jancom contract, have four names in its handout. As printed in my Feb. 28 column, they were:

"1. Associate Justice Antonio Carpio is a member of the Supreme Court's Third Division, though he declared that he inhibited himself from the Jancom case. He admitted being a former counsel of Jancom's foreign partner, Vivendi which owns 80 percent of Jancom.

"2. Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo and the Office of the Solicitor General fought against the Jancom contract in the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court. The OSG lost in both courts.

"3. Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Avelino Cruz will recommend to the President approval of the contract.

"4. Atty. Pancho Villaraza is President Macapagal's long-time personal lawyer.

"All four, according to CNN-APC 'were once affiliated with the law firm Carpio, Villaraza, Cruz Law Office'."

Marcelo and Cruz quickly faxed a reply denying involvement in the Jancom contract. They said they had inhibited themselves from the case. The statement reads:

"Undersecretary Rodel A. Cruz of the CPLC (Chief Presidential Legal Counsel) said that CPLC Avelino J. Cruz has inhibited himself on four separate occasions on the Jancom contract issue.

"In a memorandum dated Feb. 14, 2002, CPLC Cruz informed Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo that he is inhibiting himself from making any comments or recommendations with any transaction between the Philippine government and the Jancom group.

"Subsequently, in a memorandum dated Feb. 18, 2002, CPLC Cruz also informed MMDA Chair Benjamin Abalos that he is not attending the conference to discuss the Supreme Court's decision on the Jancom case. Likewise, on the same date, CPLC Cruz also informed President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo that he is inhibiting himself from making comments or recommendations on the Metro Manila Waste Management Project.

"On Feb. 27, 2002, CPLC Cruz reiterated to Abalos that he is inhibiting himself from the issue as previously stated in his Feb. 18 memorandum to the MMDA chief.

"At the same time, Assistant Solicitor General Carlos N. Ortega said that Solicitor General Simeon V. Marcelo as early as May 30, 2001, upon knowing that Vivendi, the foreign partner of Jancom, has formerly engaged the legal services of then Atty. Antonio T. Carpio, had immediately inhibited himself from participating in or handling the case to avoid any appearance of impropriety.

"In a memorandum dated May 30, 2001, the Solicitor General granted 'full and complete authority' to his associates 'to prepare, sign and submit any appropriate pleading relative to the case'."

No comment yet from Carpio or Villaraza.

CNN-APC is asking the Supreme Court, en banc, to review the Jancom case.

* * *

Comments to asiseeit@pacific.net.ph

Who's afraid of politics?

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

WHAT made former President Joseph Estrada decide to fire his lawyers?

Well, the pro-administration senators who say it's a ploy to shove his trial from the court of law to the court of politics aren't off the mark. Though it's probably more accurate to say it's a ploy to raise the ante on the politics of the case than merely to shift the venue from law to politics. I doubt politics would have disappeared from the case even if Erap had not fired his lawyers. He and his lawyers would not have made the public forget the circumstances—Erap was never found guilty by the impeachment trial, he was kicked out of office by an act of people power, a very political act—that brought him to this pass.

But reminding the public of these things today isn't the easiest thing in the world. Erap's greatest enemy is not the courts, it is time. Time, aided in no small way by the monumental capacity of this country to forget, has a way of relegating former actors and presidents by the wayside. Of making them *laos*, while new faces bathe in the limelight. It is time, more than the proclamations of the Supreme Court, that effectively legitimizes new leaders and delegitimizes old ones. The longer President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo stays in power, the more she looms like God's chosen. Conversely, the longer Erap stays out of it—or quite literally in the home of the sick, if not the aged, which is the Veterans Memorial Medical Center—the more he looks like a once and future patient, or con.

He needs something dramatic to jog people's memory, and there's none more dramatic than firing his lawyers. Speculations are rife that Erap made this decision on the very advice of his lawyers. I buy it. Erap has never acted without the advice of advisers. He is not likely to act on a matter of law without the advice of lawyers. I myself suspect it's a ploy hatched by Erap's lawyers themselves, to which Erap agreed heartily. The fact that Erap announced this decision a couple of months before the anniversary of "Edsa III" bolsters the suspicion. It looks like part of a strategy, or campaign.

Does this pose a threat to the public weal?

Not in the sense that it will lead to an "Edsa IV." People power, as I keep saying, is the hardest thing to mount. Massing a horde in one place does not an Edsa make, and even that takes a miracle, or stroke of luck, to do. I do not see that this new antic by Erap will spark another round of mass restiveness, particularly among the poor.

But it is a threat in that it could snag Erap's case. At the very least, this is so because of its intrinsic value. If our experiences as a nation over the last few years should have taught us something, it is never to underestimate the value of symbolic gestures. Particularly from charismatic or popular figures, who know how to act.

A defendant who defends himself, they say, has a fool for a client. True, but that is so only in a court of law. That is not so in the court of public opinion, which is also where Erap wants his case tried. The court of law is at least in theory governed by logic and reason while the court of public opinion is governed at least in practice by myth and emotion. People do not prove their innocence in movies by hiring brilliant lawyers, they do so by defending themselves brilliantly. History itself, or myth—which are not so easily separable in this country—tells of one Ferdinand Marcos who defended himself successfully in a murder charge and went on to become president.

It must be obvious to Erap's lawyers that Erap's strongest suit is not they but himself. His strongest appeal is not being surrounded by people but standing alone. His strongest presence is not in having people speak for him but in talking to the public himself. The less he is seen and heard, the more he disappears literally and figuratively. Hence, the logical option, which is for his lawyers to disappear. I would not take the symbolic value of these things lightly.

It is a threat as well because of its extrinsic value. Who's afraid of politics? Well, Ms Macapagal should be. She is extremely vulnerable in that department.

Ms Macapagal's vulnerability does not just come from the fact that she is an unelected President. It also comes from the fact that she is the first President after 1986 who can run again. That makes her term volatile in the extreme, a hotbed for politicking right and left. I've always said that the only way she can solve this is by taking the high road, by making the kind of personal sacrifice she has always asked others to do. By vowing not to run again. By asking the nation on the strength of that vow to gather behind, or around, her to undo the evils of the past.

She does that and Erap may bleed the national tear ducts dry with his antics, he may shout to heaven about the injustice of being felled by a successor who did nothing to deserve being so, he may scoff at the right of the robed men and women to sit in judgment over him, and come to nothing but grief. Ms Macapagal's moral stature will be beyond reach. Her integrity will be beyond doubt. Her right to rule will be beyond question.

She does not do that—and it is obvious she won't—and Erap's antics will take on a weight beyond their intrinsic worth. Trials are curious things, as the impeachment trial itself showed. The trials of kings and paupers most of all. They do not just draw attention to the tried, they draw attention to the triers. Ms Macapagal looms as usurper rather than caretaker, and not all her utterances about leaving Erap's case to the courts will matter. Erap's guilt of innocence will be linked with hers. Erap's plight will be linked with hers. Erap's fate will be linked with hers.

They will walk side by side—like law and politics.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

Opposition should help clarify matters

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SOME House opposition leaders are pressuring the Sandiganbayan and the Macapagal administration to allow former President Joseph Estrada to go abroad for medical treatment and exile, amid reports that his followers are mobilizing to create trouble for the government. The argument: allow Estrada to go abroad so there won't be trouble. The trouble is, allowing him to go abroad because of a threat of destabilization from his followers would constitute blackmail, as some House members who had earlier endorsed the resolution seeking his departure now realize. No self-respecting administration can allow itself to be blackmailed.

In the second place, this option is not within President Macapagal's power, even though doubtless she has persuasive influence on the jurists. It is entirely in the hands of the court, but it cannot allow itself to be shot-gunned into caving in because of some perceived threat to national security; to do so could cause the whole court system to collapse. Think, for instance, of all those judges in Mindanao ruling against well-connected criminals there. What would happen if they were to act out of a fear of possible trouble?

* * *

The opposition senators have accused the Supreme Court and the Sandiganbayan of being "politicized" but they don't bother to explain the basis of this accusation. This is unfortunate especially since some of us continue to hope that the likes of Senators Aquilino Pimentel and Blas Ople would be more enlightened than the more partisan opposition members. Statements like the alleged "politicization" of the courts are not contributing to stabilize the charged atmosphere; in fact they are irresponsible statements. If these senators are honest and not partisan robots, they cannot possibly be convinced that the trial of Estrada has been "railroaded," for as acting presiding justice Minita Chico Nazario put it, just to arraign Estrada, it took all of nine months.

Instead of flailing wild accusations against the court system and gloating over the firing of Estrada's lawyers as a "master political stroke," what the senators should do is to enlighten the emotional *masa* on the issues involved in the Estrada plunder case and the way the justice system works, e.g., the relation between crime and punishment, and between evidence and incrimination.

* * *

Recently, in the Senate, in the course of following some Commission on Appointments proceedings, I ran into Sen. Renato Cayetano and asked him about the issue of his purchase of 3 million BW Resources shares. He invited me to drop by his office the next time I was around, "to hear my side and see some documents I have prepared in answer to all the accusations." The senator stressed that he had been playing the stock market for years in the name of his private account, "CYC 1213," and in fact the market's continued decline caused him to incur a paper loss of at least P10 million. Cayetano stressed that he had never hidden the fact that his purchases of stocks in such firms as Ayala, Philweb and BW had been in the name of CYC (the acronym stands for "Compañero Y Compañera," the TV legal-aid show that he used to co-host, which catapulted him to fame, helping his election as senator). He said his broker, A.T. de Castro, has attested to his stock market activities under CYC and that in fact, even his car plates bear the acronym.

* * *

Cayetano stressed that contrary to the opposition's charge that he never paid for the 3 million BW shares that he acquired at the prevailing price of P3 per share in the name of CYC 1213, he had issued two post-dated checks to Dante Tan amounting to P9 million in two equal installments of P4.5 million each, dated May 31, 1999 and Sept. 27, 1999. He showed me the checks. After a lapse of about three weeks, he related, he asked Tan why the shares had not been transferred to his broker, and Tan replied that they were subject to a holding period of six months. When Cayetano reminded him that they had made no such agreement, Tan transferred two million shares to broker A.T. De Castro in the name of CYC 1213, but kept the remaining one million shares under the "holding period."

* * *

The lawmaker related that at the end of May 1999 he decided to sell the one million shares, by then worth P12.4 million in the market, and Tan offered to buy them back himself. What Tan did was to cancel Cayetano's May 31 check payment of P4.5 million and issue him instead on June 1, 1999 a check for P7.9 million, representing the balance of Tan's P12.4 million payment. Cayetano stressed, however, that his second check for P4.5 million, the second payment for the 3 million shares he bought earlier, was deposited by Tan with Far East Bank on Feb. 24, 2000. He said that what confused opposition senators was the fact that Tan had issued two checks of P7.9 million each, one dated May 31 and made out to "Rene L. Cayetano," which was returned to Tan at the senator's request, and replaced by Tan with his June 1 check made out in the name of CYC 1213 and properly deposited.

Cayetano also stressed that contrary to the opposition's accusation that he never paid the corresponding taxes on those three million BW shares he sold, "in fact the government earned about P1.4 million in taxes paid to the BIR" through the voluntary assessment program. He said that a certification from broker A.T. De Castro dated Jan. 17, 2002 shows a detailed report of the taxes it withheld. Moreover, he said that contrary to the opposition's allegation that his 1999 Statement of Assets and Liabilities did not reflect his BW earnings, it showed a net worth of P71,767,744, an increase of P30 million over his 1998 net worth.

Blurred photo of Abu Sayyaf cruelty

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

THE CONTROVERSY surrounding the showing of the videotape of soldiers being beheaded by alleged Abu Sayyaf bandits affected, in some way, the INQUIRER.

Last Feb. 20, the front page of the newspaper carried prominently the blurred photo of a Filipino soldier kneeling on the ground while somebody behind him was about to chop his head off. The photo was taken from one of the video clips shown on Channel 7 the night before. It was a "photo grab," as newspaper photographers call it.

The newspaper photo carried the caption "Gory video footage showing Abu Sayyaf bandits beheading captured Filipino soldiers in Basilan was meant to quash opposition to join RP-US operations in Basilan."

The blurring of the picture did not sit well with reader Ricardo Morales of the Philippine Army. In his letter, he complained that "in the past the PDI itself showed the picture of a man whose ear was being sliced off, the dead bodies of soldiers and various other bloody and gory pictures.

"Why can't the PDI swallow what it dishes out? Were those pictures and the beheading video not of the same genre? Does the PDI fear that the beheading video would desensitize society? Does not the PDI, by showing the pictures of dead soldiers, gloating that military men are dying, contribute to desensitizing society?

"The members of the ASG or whatever the group calls itself are animals and the Filipino public should be aware of that. There is no political, religious, psychological or whatever justification for these unspeakable acts of barbarity.

"Those who beheaded the soldiers and those who murdered Wall Street journalist Pearl are one and the same—they filmed their acts for the purpose of letting the world know what they are capable of. In doing so, they confirm that they are animals. They will get what they deserve."

Appreciation

Too gory to be published as shown in the video. The violent scene might traumatize the readers, especially the young ones. These were the reasons cited by the editor in chief to justify her decision to blur the subject photo.

She believes the message of the photo—to show the public the brutality of the Abu Sayyaf bandits—can be effectively conveyed to the public even if its characters are not clear to the eye. Stated differently, why ruin the reader's breakfast with a bloody picture when something less abhorrent can accomplish the same objective?

According to her, her decision to fudge the photo was not meant to avoid desensitizing society. As it is, there are enough events happening around that can desensitize us to acts of violence without the newspaper having to make any contribution.

Neither is it correct, she added, to say that the INQUIRER finds pleasure in showing pictures of dead military men or that those photos are intended to condition the public's mind into believing that the death of soldiers is not something we should be overly concerned about.

She said that the newspaper is very careful about showing deaths of military personnel. If those photos cannot be avoided, the angle usually used is a panoramic shot of the victims showing their torsos or boots, with their faces either covered or blurred.

With regard to the picture of a man whose ear was being sliced off, the editor in chief explained that compared to the beheading incident, the ear cutting was less gory. To soften the impact of the act, she made the photo look grainy and darkened parts of it.

Evaluation

I agree with the reader's statement that there can be no political, religious or any other justification whatsoever to justify the dastardly act of the Abu Sayyaf that was captured on tape. Yes, those animals (are we not insulting the animals by comparing them to those bandits?) deserve the full measure of punishment the government can muster if they are captured.

But I have serious reservations about the wisdom of publishing the subject photo in its full bloody splendor, as the reader has suggested. I think the blurring sufficiently concealed the more revolting parts of the photo without losing its true essence.

Although indistinct, the images showed how the dastardly act was committed minus the anguish on the face of the poor soldier or blood spurting, as what usually happens when the head is violently severed from the neck.

The editor in chief made a judgment call on how the subject picture should be presented to the public. It must have been a difficult decision to make considering that her father was a military official for more than three decades.

Wrong headline

From conditions of war, let's go to the peace of the church. A reader, Jennifer Sibal of Marikina City, caught a glaring error on the newspaper's front page that can make editors gnash their teeth in frustration.

She wrote: "May I just point out that there was an error on today's (Feb. 26) front page. Among the headlines was one that read something like: Msgr. Soc…I cannot imagine how this escaped the editor's notice. The priest you are referring to is now a bishop! In fact, the PDI wrote a story prior to his episcopal ordination and even had a feature on Bishop Soc a day or two after his ordination.

"This oversight, right on the front page, really alarms me, a PDI subscriber. An error like this makes one doubt the credibility of your paper. Perhaps, the writer is merely accustomed to referring to 'Father Soc' as monsignor. I sincerely hope that you will be more careful next time."

The headline the reader is referring to reads in its entirety "Msgr. Soc: Edsa Shrine is for praying for peace." The accompanying news is about Bishop Socrates Villegas' defense of the decision of the Archdiocese of Manila to ban political rallies at the historic Edsa Shrine, also known as the Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace.

The reader is correct. The headline should have been "Bishop Soc." The good bishop was inadvertently demoted to the rank from which he had earlier been promoted. He holds the distinction of being the youngest priest in our country to be ordained bishop of the Catholic Church.

The INQUIRER apologizes to the good bishop, the faithful and the readers for the slip-up. It regrets whatever discomfort the error may have caused. Hopefully, the incident will not be a cause for the excommunication of the responsible parties.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

Legends

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

EVERY March, in time for its charter anniversary, Davao City confers the Datu Bago awards to Davaoeños who excelled in various fields. The award was named after a legendary Moro leader who was killed fighting the Spanish conquistadores in Davao led by a soldier of fortune named Jose Uyanguren.

But naming the city's highest award in memory of Datu Bago had stirred a controversy in the past because of claims that the legendary datu was a "bandit" and therefore should not be honored. But Datu Bago, like perhaps many freedom fighters of the past, was perhaps wrongly profiled as a "bandit" in order to debase the legitimacy of the anti-colonial resistance movements.

Even now, despite the official change of name to Magsaysay Avenue, Davao City's version of "Chinatown" is still referred to by many as "Uyanguren Street." By contrast, a Datu Bago Street can be found in Agdao District, a largely urban poor community.

These and other historical anecdotes on Davao's rich history are sadly known to only a few, considering the scarcity of materials on such subject and the fact that most books and materials available chronicled mainly the history of the north.

On this aspect, the recent issue of Tambara (Volume 18), the annual journal of the Ateneo de Davao University, is welcomed by all students of history and for everyone who cares to know and understand Mindanao.

One interesting piece in the issue is on the fate of a forgotten Manobo hero, Mangulayon. Written by Dr. Macariu D. Tiu, a 2001 Palanca winner for short story in Cebuano, who also teaches literature at the Ateneo de Davao University, the article revealed the painstaking way of writing local history, especially relying on the collective memory of the people.

Lt. Edward C. Bolton, the first politico-military governor of Davao, was killed, together with another American, on June 6, 1906, in Malalag, now part of Davao del Sur, while reportedly trying to pacify the lumads, who were accused of planning to kill American planters in the area. Two months after Bolton's assassination, Mangulayon was reported to have been killed on Aug. 3, 1906 by pursuing US soldiers in the hinterlands of Malita, Davao del Sur.

However, in the course of Tiu's research on the background of Mangulayon, he discovered conflicting versions of the lumad leader's "death or non-death."

Several legends blanketed his persona, "including some unflattering descriptions." One version said he was not killed because he had amulets to protect him. Another claimed his *anting-anting* was neutralized, making him vulnerable to bullets. Yet another version claimed that it was another lumad who was mistakenly identified because he wore Mangulayon's turban and red shirt and used his gun in fighting it out with the pursuing American troops.

Dissecting those leads almost a century after the event happened, Tiu learned, is no easy task. People in the places where Mangulayon was said to have sojourned initially refused to discuss the incident or give little information at all. As one Manobo woman in Davao del Sur explained to Tiu: "When we were still young, we were told to keep our mouth shut lest people overhear what we say. We talked in whispers at night. We are a *bagani* (warrior) family. If they learn you have killed this or that, they will take revenge. So it is better to keep your mouth shut."

"And I wondered, is the event that happened in 1906 still not being talked about openly in year 1999? As I mulled over this question, it dawned on me that we are dealing here with a defeated people and victors are still around. In Davao del Sur, the descendants of the American planters are the elite families, and therefore the original inhabitants, the lumads, retain their fear of the conquerors whose descendants are the biggest landlords in their area" noted Tiu.

When Tiu got hold of the Aug. 25, 1906 issue of the Zamboanga-based Mindanao Herald detailing the assassination of Bolton, he said he was convinced that indeed the legendary Mangulayon did not die during the encounter with American troops on Aug. 3, 1906. While the report claimed that an American planter identified a dead body as that of Mangulayon, it was surprising that no other dead body was recovered in a supposed encounter where Mangulayon was aided by his men. This apparently confirmed an informant's claim that someone did a Willie Nepomuceno act to spare their leader, Mangulayon.

From Davao del Sur, Tiu's research further brought him to the other parts of Davao, where similar claims about Mangulayon surviving the encounter abound.

Finally, in February 2000, in Lupon, Davao Oriental, he was able to interview by accident direct descendants of Mangulayon—Babu Tapia Mangulayon Lazaro, a daughter, and Datu Abdul Rashid Mangulayon, a grandson. "I told them what I learned about Mangulayon…that he assassinated Bolton, that he outwitted the Americans and moved on to Lupon where he lived to a ripe old age, that he had many wives, children and grandchildren among the Manobos, the Blaans, the Tagakaolos, the Bagobos and the Kalagans, and that further, Mangulayon is a hero and that indeed they, and all of us should be proud of him."

In Davao City, a street straddling the city's main commercial district is named after Bolton, just like Uyanguren. Will Mangulayon, just like Datu Bago, be eventually honored for his role in Davao's anti-colonial history?

* * *

Comments to karlos_z23@hotmail.com or kar_laws@yahoo.com

The truth about the 'ylang-ylang'

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

MY annual sojourn to the tallest peak on the island of Luzon, (which is nearly 3 kilometers up in the air in Mount Pulag National Park) began quite inauspiciously this year. First, a bus, plying the route to the Park's Visitor Center (three hours northeast of Baguio at Ambangeg) careened off the steep mountain road and plunged into a ravine, reportedly killing some 20 people and causing many injuries. The accident was even reported in this newspaper, a week before my planned trek. Although the bus line made the requisite sacrificial slaughters of pigs or chickens appropriate to local custom, let us hope it also made a thoroughgoing inspection and repair of all its dilapidated buses.

Next, a frantic text message from the Ambangeg Visitor Center at Pulag National Park reported a fire in the grasslands, which came two weeks before our contemplated trek: I REGRET 2 NFRM U THAT D GRASLND WS BURND LST SUNDAY.DY DNT KNW HO DID IT.I KNW THS WIL HAV A BEARNG ON UR PLANS 2 CME THIS MONTH M SORY.

There was reference to a mysterious fire in the extensive alpine grassland area which covers the highest elevations of the Mount Pulag National Park. One would not want to be caught asleep in a tent caught in a prairie fire. The last time a fire hit the alpine grasslands of Pulag, as I recall, was in 1996, when several hundred hectares were blackened, due to a careless camper using "uling" or coconut coals for a camp fire. The tinder-dry bonsai bamboo which covers Pulag's upper reaches was perfect kindling and fuel for the ensuing upland prairie fire. But this year's incident, which only burned some 50 hectares, might have been caused by a mysterious helicopter that was seen visiting the Pulag grasslands without Park authorization or permission.

Mainly staffed by unpaid local volunteers, there is a Protected Area Office in the town of Ambangeg, which operates the visitors' center and oversees the park for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The staff are unpaid but dedicated to their duty, such as they see it.

Oh well, a bus accident and a grass fire, these were not going to deter me from an annual visit made habitual and always refreshing for body and soul. The primeval beauty and unique flora and fauna of the park have attracted many adventurers and visitors over the years. The Park straddles the boundary area of Benguet, Ifugao and Nueva Vizcaya. Mt. Pulag is listed at 2,922 meters elevation, next only to Mt. Apo in height. Recently Mt. Pulag was even the subject of, well, breathless, television coverage by a national network.

Previous even to that, Mt. Pulag achieved a limited fame of sorts in the world of pharmaceutics, when in 2000, Botanic Garden News of Smith College in Massachusetts reported the presence there of *Taxus sumatrana*, a variety of pine tree, from which an anticancer drug called Taxol may be produced. Apparently, specimens were collected and a chemical assay showed the Philippine trees to be viable sources of the potent antitumor drug. The inevitable and usual accusations of biopiracy and exploitation by scientists from American multinational companies arose.

Always at the center of reactionary criticisms of biotechnology and genetic engineering is the matter of patents by which scientists and their corporate backers protect their commercial interests in scientific discoveries.

What some fail to realize is that the whole system of international patents is designed to ensure that really useful knowledge will eventually become part of the public domain after a relatively short period of time during which inventors or discoverers of such knowledge can have exclusive commercial benefit. The rights granted under patents are never permanent, they are always temporary. In exchange, full and substantial disclosure and documentation of the invention or discovery is made, which can later be used by anyone. A good example is the patent on the process for making artificial human insulin in genetically engineered bacteria to treat human diabetes. After the patent expired, any pharmaceutical firm in the world could use the recipe described in the patent to make the valuable drug. Conversely, the Coca-Cola Company has never filed a patent for its Coke recipe, which means it can keep it a "trade secret" forever, never to be divulged!

By the way, I think it is my duty to once and for all, blow up a bona fide myth and urban legend surrounding the Philippine *ylang-ylang*. During the last few years, many unsubstantiated reports and claims have been made saying that the Philippine *ylang-ylang* has been "patented" by a French perfumery arm of Yves St. Laurent. Various versions of the story, some replete with conspiratorial details of foreign biopiracy syndicates, or under the mantle of actual news stories, have made the rounds in the last few years. I am pleased to say that this story is totally false. There are no patents in American, European or Japanese data bases that even vaguely resemble the wild claims of purloined *ylang-ylang* genes. The whole *ylang-ylang* story appears to be a hoax that is never challenged, since the story periodically reappears in various media, perhaps in lean editorial times. The Philippine *ylang-ylang* is still wild and free, and neglected.

* * *

Comments to deanjbocobo@yahoo.com

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Erap's US doctor can operate here

MUCH has been said regarding former president Joseph Estrada's planned operation in the United States. By this time, I hope the Sandiganbayan justices have enough scientific information about his disease and the surgery on which to base their decision whether to allow Estrada to go to the United States or not.

Osteoarthritis is a degenerative disease that goes with age. It is a slow, "wear and tear" process that gets worse as the patient grows old. It can be disabling but certainly not life threatening.

Total knee replacement (TKR) is considered a miracle treatment because it makes the cripple walk again. It consists of replacing the affected knee with metal and plastic to make the joint surfaces smooth, stable and pain-free. This operation has been done in the Philippines as early as the mid-'70s (not only in the '80s as reported by some orthopedic surgeons) and today it has become a routine procedure. Through the years, the design of the prosthesis has improved and an implant company comes out with a new model from time to time, but basically, the surgical technique remains the same. What the public should know is that after a successful surgery, intensive physiotherapy is required to make the patient walk normal again. Rehabilitation can take a long time and for this reason, one may justify his prolonged stay in a place or hospital if he wishes to.

Estrada has the right to choose his doctor and Dr. Christopher Mow, his American orthopedic surgeon, can be invited to do the operation here. If he claims that his preferred prosthesis brand and model is not locally available, he can bring the set of implants and instruments with him. Many hospitals in Manila are very capable of handling this case, including the Veterans Memorial Medical Center where I performed the first TKR in the country way back in May 1976.

—ANTONIO B. SISON, M.D.,
MPA, orthopedic surgeon,
Santo Tomas University
Hospital, España, Manila

How safe is safe sex?

A RECENT advertisement in the INQUIRER (PDI, 2/18/02) indicted the Catholic bishops' ban on condom use as a cause of "millions of people around the world dying" of AIDS.

Claiming to be "Catholic," the advertisement's foreign sponsor impudently deprecates religion and projects the faithful who "play by the rules" as insensitive, uncaring, or bigots. Sure. The whole idea is to condition the majority (most of whom are your teenage daughters and sons) to see less and less sense in playing by the rules, including personal morality, all for so-called "reproductive health."

What reproductive health? Safe sex? There is no such thing. Because the AIDS virus is so small, condoms have a high failure rate in the prevention of AIDS transmission. (British Medical Journal, October 1985, P. 1196)

As documented by William D. Gairdner ("The War Against the Family," Canada: 1992, P. 261), Fischl et al. showed that the rate of AIDS transmission among couples using condoms when only one partner was infected was 17 percent during a short 18-month period. (Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol. 257, 1987, P. 640) A standard test of condoms manufactured between 1987 and 1990 conducted by Health and Welfare Canada using very stringent standards reported that 40 percent of samples failed in at least one of the three tests. In another investigation, the US Federal Drug Administration found 20 percent of condoms tested to be unreliable. (FDA Medical Devices Bulletin, September 1987, P. 1)

Take it from Dr. Marian Crenshaw, past president of the American Association of Sex Educators. In the June 1987 Heildelberg World Congress of Sexology, she asked 800 sexologists the question: "If you had available the partner of your dreams, and knew that person carried the [HIV] virus—would you rely on a condom for protection?" Not one person raised a hand.

—JO M. IMBONG, Abay
Pamilya (Family Front
International) Foundation,
Unit 101 Valle Verde
Townhomes, Kaimito St., Valle
Verde II, Pasig City

Stupidity, not a defense

IN SYDNEY, Australia a housewife lost the family house she inherited when she affixed her signature on a mortgage document her husband's bank brought to her to secure a loan for her husband's (now former) ailing business. The supreme court did not consider her ignorance and stupidity as a defense.

I wonder what the Philippine justice system will make of deposed President Joseph Estrada's admission of his stupidity. Will he lose his Greenhills house and his mistresses' mansions?

—MENCHU GARCIA-ROBINS,
mgrobins@bigpond.com

Decent jobs first

THIS has reference to the article "Health insurance for sex workers" published on Feb. 19.

We beg to disagree with their being "sex workers." These women are not sex workers (as your paper calls them) but rather "prostituted women"—mothers, sisters, aunts—female humans who are forced to sell their bodies because of poverty.

Now, instead of providing them with a decent way of earning a living, PhilHealth Inc. plans to seemingly "legalize" prostitution. PhilHealth regional manager Reynaldo Capangpangan's plan to enroll prostitutes in a health insurance program not only legitimizes prostitution in the Eastern Visayas region but even plans to profit from these already impoverished girls.

It is the government's responsibility to find decent and meaningful jobs for these women who face the risk of dying from sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and infecting the rest of the community with the illness they spread. The government data provided for in the article is alarming. The fact that more than a hundred are working in pub houses while 86 of them are reportedly infected with STDs is a serious matter that should be looked into by the local government of Tacloban.

Once again, in behalf of Gabriela-Eastern Visayas, I reiterate that the best thing to do is to give decent jobs to these women. Legalizing what they do is adding insult to injury.

—DOLORES C. GERAN, ad
hoc chair, Gabriela-Eastern
Visayas, Rm. 13, PCPR-EV Office
Bldg., HIC-Religious Sisters of
Mercy Compound, Youngfield
District, Tacloban City

Three basic qualifications for Cabinet men

THE INTENSE debate over whether or not to confirm the appointment of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho showed the need to reengineer the government by clearly establishing the qualifications required of an appointee to a high government position.

To qualify for a Cabinet position, a Filipino citizen needs three basic qualifications:

1. He must have the complete trust and confidence of the President inasmuch as he is the President's alter ego. If trust is gone, the department secretary must immediately resign. In this year of the horse, we can compare the department heads to a team of horses pulling the stagecoach of the nation. The President who drives the coach must often crack the whip to ensure that the horses maintain the pace and strength required for the nation to progress. The horses that cannot keep up with the pace and lack the strength to pull their share of the load must be replaced so that their weakness will not force the rest of the team to slow down.

2. He must have proven competence and experience in the work that he must manage for and in behalf of the President. Technical competence is important because experience reduces the costs of the learning curve. Camacho is academically and professionally qualified, having graduated from internationally recognized business schools and has applied the academic knowledge in actual working experience with prestigious international financial institutions.

3. He must have proven integrity, which basically means that he has not been convicted of any crime involving breach of trust like stealing money. Camacho's critics never showed any evidence of any violation of trust committed by him.

Camacho obviously meets the test as far as the three basic qualifications of trust and confidence, integrity and competence are concerned. Any other criticisms leveled against him could therefore be considered as personal or political.

The parameters of qualifications for high appointive government positions should be well beyond the political or personal plane in order that we can encourage our talented and competent young people to handle key positions in the government and inject fresh ideas into the critical function of governance. To publicly crucify qualified nominees to government positions will discourage the best and the brightest from joining the government.

For the country to progress, only the best and the brightest of our people should be working in the government.

—D.J. WENCESLAO JR.,
chair, Advocacy Committee,
Philippine Jaycee Senate, 3/F
Jaycees Bldg., 14 Don
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Quezon City

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

India religious riots ease, but deaths near 500

AHMEDABAD, India—Killings in India's worst Hindu-Muslim bloodshed in a decade eased overnight, but the death toll jumped to almost 500 as scores more bodies were pulled from the rubble, officials said on Sunday.

In the bloodiest incident overnight, a mob burned four people alive in Gujarat state's Palampur town. Police opened fire to disperse the attackers, killing one.

A senior government security official said the toll from the rioting across Gujarat had risen to 478, including 58 Hindus burned alive on Wednesday when a suspected Muslim mob torched a train, triggering the wave of revenge killings.

"The figure has gone up not because of fresh incidents but the recovery of bodies is being reported from different areas," Ashok Narayan said. The official toll on Saturday was about 350.

Thousands of soldiers are patrolling the state's main city, Ahmedabad, and some other hotspots, but have yet to reach Gujarat's more remote villages.

The killings have so far been confined to Gujarat after state governments across the world's second most populous nation immediately mobilized tens of thousands of security personnel after Wednesday's train attack.

Narayan said there were sporadic incidents overnight, but no major attacks and curfew had been relaxed in some areas.

Many of the dead were burned alive when mobs attacked Muslim residential areas and shops. Police shot dead almost 80 trying to control the crowds.

Britain's Foreign Office said one Briton was killed and two more are missing. The state of 65 million is the source of many Indian immigrants now living in Britain and the United States.

Narayan said extra troops and paramilitary forces were being requisitioned, but the situation appeared to be easing.

"It takes time, but the wound is healing up," he said.

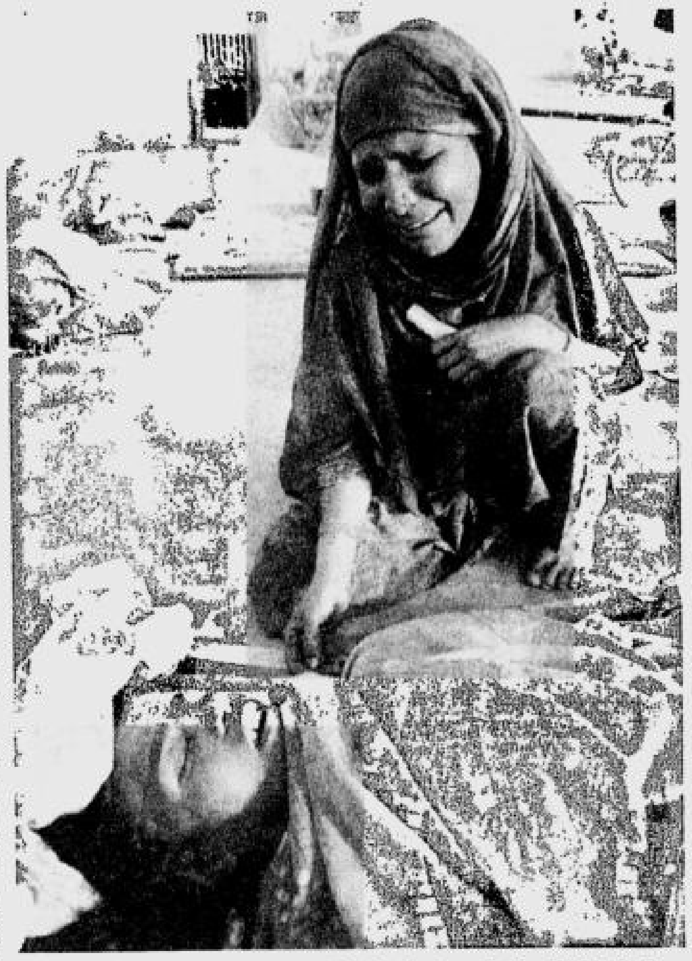
The president of neighboring Islamic Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, on Saturday condemned the killings and pressed India to do more to protect its large Muslim minority—one of the world's largest Muslim populations.

"The measures taken by the Government of India for the protection of its Muslim minority, which is the target of Hindu extremism and terrorism, need to be strengthened," he said.

"The carnage must be brought to an end. All those responsible for the violence need to be arrested and punished."

Pakistan, which borders Gujarat, and Bangladesh, to India's east, last week boosted security for their Hindu minorities.

Nuclear rivals India and Pakistan are locked in a military standoff over New Delhi's demand that Islamabad close down anti-Indian Islamic militants based in Pakistan.



A MUSLIM woman weeps near the body of a relative killed during communal riots in the western Indian city of Ahmedabad March 2. The massacre of 58 Hindu activists last Wednesday triggered an orgy of retaliatory killings by Hindu mobs. REUTERS

Gujarat's violence is the worst crisis to confront Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) since winning office in 1999.

Vajpayee has urged calm and appealed to BJP ally the Vishwa Hindu Parishwad (VHP) to shelve divisive plans to build a temple on a site sacred to both Hindus and Muslims in the northern Indian city of Ayodhya. *Reuters*

Malaysians asked to help nab illegals

KUALA LUMPUR—Officials spearheading the biggest sweep against illegal immigrants in years urged Malaysians Sunday to help police flush out more foreigners for deportation.

"This is one opportunity that has not come by in the last 20 years, so let us do it now," said Chong Kah Kiat, chief minister of Sabah state. "Those who have no place here... should be sent to where they came from."

Chong, quoted by the national news agency Bernama, said the government wanted to remove all illegal immigrants from Sabah, on the northeast tip of Borneo island.

Last week, police there screened at least 7,906 people and demolished 2,456 squatter homes.

About 1,824 people, mostly from neighboring Indonesia and the Philippines, did not have proper documents. Officials have said deportations have begun, and immigrants face a whipping if they return.

Authorities say no illegal immigrants caught in the sweep have been identified as militants, but the operation aims to root out any who are shielding behind the vast illegal alien population.

The government argues that illegal migration poses a national security threat. The crackdown coincides with the arrest of Islamic militants—some of them from Indonesia—accused of plotting to destroy US targets in nearby Singapore. *AP*

Macedonia police kill 7 suspected int'l terrorists

SKOPJE—Macedonian police said Saturday they shot seven people dead who were thought to be part of an international terror network targeting US, British and German interests.

They said the seven, including some Pakistani nationals, ambushed police in a shootout outside the capital Skopje and were all killed. Police suffered no casualties, they said.

Officials linked the incident to the arrest of two Jordanians and two Bosnians late last month, which had not been previously announced.

A high-ranking police official said it appeared the seven men had been "preparing terrorist attacks against several key buildings in Skopje, including embassies."

The men reportedly unleashed automatic weapons fire on a police patrol in Rastanski Lozja, near the village of Ljuboten, in the early hours of Saturday.

Police said the group were carrying hand grenades, rocket-launchers and pistols, and had come from the direction of Kosovo, the UN-administered Serbian province.

They said that the incident appeared to be linked to "several recent arrests," including last month's seizure of the two Jordanians and two Bosnians, all of whom had studied in Jordan.

After that arrest, police found and seized a compact disc which contained what they said was "10,000 pages of documents on various operations in the region, already or to be carried out," they said.

"These attacks were aimed primarily at top officials and embassies in Skopje, in particular the embassies of the United States, Britain and Germany," said a police official who asked not to be named.

But the US embassy said in a statement there were no indications that the suspected Pakistanis had planned attacks against it.

The embassy and the Macedonian interior ministry were maintaining contacts to shed full light on Saturday's incident, it added.

The British and German embassies also said they did not know about any possible attacks. *AFP*

Experts hold key Agent Orange meet in Hanoi

HANOI—US and Vietnamese government scientists and international experts gathered in Hanoi on Sunday for a key meeting on the effects of the toxic Vietnam War defoliant Agent Orange.

The three-day conference will look at what is known about the effects of the Agent Orange and its major contaminants—highly poisonous dioxins—and consider future research needs.

The issue is a tricky one for the United States, which has faced compensation demands from both Hanoi and US veterans for exposure to the toxic defoliants sprayed to deny communist soldiers jungle cover during the Vietnam War that ended in 1975.

US forces sprayed millions of gallons of Agent Orange and other defoliants on Vietnam from 1962 to 1971. Spraying was halted after it was discovered that Agent Orange, which contained the dioxin TCDD, caused cancer in rats.

The US government says it hopes the conference will lead to a more precise understanding of the effects of herbicides and other toxic chemicals in Vietnam, with which it normalized ties in 1995.

But it stressed it is not about to entertain compensation claims from Vietnam.

"US Vietnam-relations were normalized in 1995 after Vietnam dropped claims war reparations/compensation," a US Embassy statement said. "At the time of normalization, neither compensation nor reparations were granted or contemplated for the future."

Asked if this situation could change in the future depending on the outcome of more research, a US Embassy spokesman said: "I think the statement speaks for itself."

The Hanoi conference came about after intense lobbying in the United States by the Vietnam Veterans of America, which would like to see more compensation for members who have fallen sick after exposure to Agent Orange, and assistance to Vietnamese victims. *Reuters*

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US, Afghan soldiers killed in biggest ground offensive

WASHINGTON—One US soldier and three Afghan troops were killed and others wounded on Saturday as Western coalition forces and their Afghan allies launched their biggest joint ground offensive of the war in Afghanistan against regrouping al-Qaida and Taliban forces, officials said.

US defense officials said that Afghan forces led the attack south of Gardez in eastern Afghanistan's Paktia province, but that more American and coalition ground troops were involved than in any operation of the five-month-old war.

The casualties occurred as hundreds of Afghan troops backed by US and other coalition ground forces and American bombing—including two new "thermobaric" cave bombs—moved against up to 5,000 die-hard al-Qaida guerrillas of fugitive Osama bin Laden and Taliban fighters.

"Firefights have been intense at times in heavy combat actions. The exact size of the enemy forces occupying a series of cave complexes is not known," the US Central Command, based in Tampa, Florida, said in a statement late on Saturday.

"There has been one US service member and three Afghan forces killed. An unspecified number of US and Afghan forces have been injured," added Central Command, which is responsible for the US war in Afghanistan sparked by the Sept. 11 attacks on America.

Reports from the battlefield indicated that Afghan troops initially were beaten back in fierce fighting that began on Friday night Afghan time and continued into darkness on Saturday.

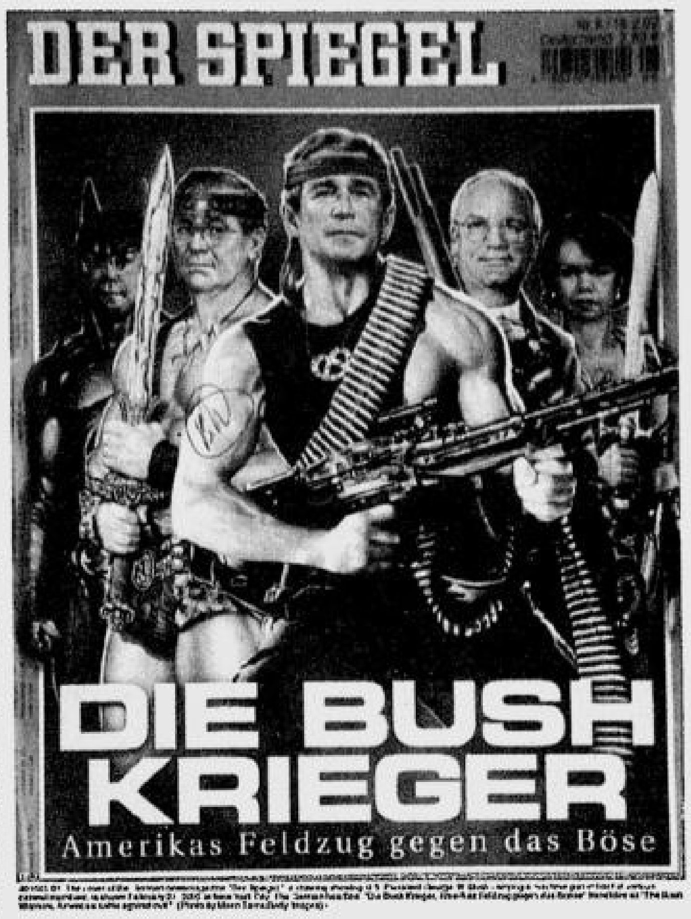
"It's a major operation, the biggest involving coalition troops of the war," said one official, who asked not to be identified and declined to provide numbers.

Other US defense officials said US warplanes dropped two new "907 kg "thermobaric" bombs into mountain caves where al-Qaida and Taliban forces were believed hiding.

The recently developed American bombs are filled with a special explosive mixture that creates a high-pressure blast, driving all of the air out of a cave and potentially suffocating those inside.

Central Command's statement said that "more than 80 pieces of ordnance have been dropped from aircraft in support of Afghan, US and coalition forces." The statement said the weather has been cold and the terrain snow-covered and mountainous.

There were no further details on the casualties, but a number of other countries including Britain, France, Australia and Canada, also have coalition forces involved in fighting the al-Qaida and Taliban in Afghanistan. *Reuters*



A DRAWING of US President George W. Bush carrying a machine gun in front of various Cabinet members is depicted on the cover of the Feb. 27 issue of the German newsmagazine "Der Speigel." The German headline translates as "The Bush Warriors, America's battle against evil." GETTY IMAGES

US fears possible nuke attack, puts up sensors

WASHINGTON—Fearing Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network may be making progress in obtaining nuclear weapons, the Bush administration has been placing sophisticated radiation sensors at US border positions and key locations around Washington, the Washington Post reported on Sunday.

The administration also has placed the elite US commando unit Delta Force on a new standby alert to seize any nuclear materials that the sensors may detect, the newspaper added. The Delta Force has been given the task of killing or disabling anyone with a suspected nuclear device and turning the bomb over to scientists to be disarmed, the Post added.

The sensors, known as gamma ray and neutron flux detectors, have been deployed since November at US borders, certain overseas facilities and choke points around Washington, the newspaper said, citing US government policymakers.

The sensors also have been used at designated "national-security special events" such as the Olympics in Utah, the Post said. Allied countries, including Saudi Arabia, have rushed new detectors to their borders after US intelligence warnings, the newspaper added.

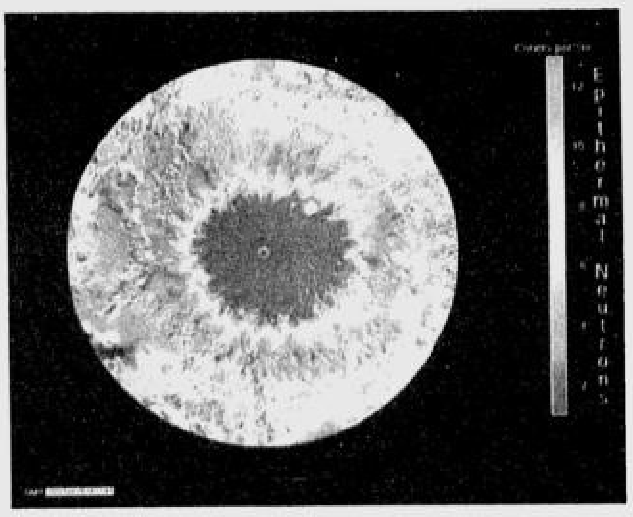
Up until now, the devices were carried only by nuclear search teams dispatched when extortionists claim to have radioactive materials, the Post reported.

The Post reported that President George W. Bush has ordered his national security team to give nuclear terrorism priority over every other threat to the United States after an October briefing by CIA Director George Tenet on al-Qaida's nuclear aspirations.

"Clearly... the sense of urgency has gone up," the newspaper quoted a senior policymaker on nuclear, biological and chemical weapons terrorism as saying.

Another official was quoted as saying, "The more you gather information, the more our concerns increased about al-Qaida's focus on weapons of mass destruction of all kinds."

The consensus US government view is that Saudi-born extremist Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network likely has acquired the lower-level radionuclides strontium 90 and cesium 137, which cannot produce a nuclear detonation but are radioactive contaminants. Conventional explosives could scatter them in what is known as a radiological dispersion device, better known as a "dirty bomb." *Reuters*



MARS UP CLOSE REUTERS/NASA

View of the south pole of Mars from measurements made during the first week of Mars Odyssey Spacecraft mapping in February. The Mars Odyssey spacecraft has identified what appear to be large areas of ice on the red planet's surface, a discovery that could prove to be a key to the search for life there. Odyssey, which began mapping the Martian surface last week, used a suite of gamma ray spectrometer instruments to detect significant amounts of hydrogen near the planet's south pole, which scientists said are most likely due to the presence of ice formed from water. Soil enriched in hydrogen is indicated by the deep blue colors on the map, where a low intensity of epithermal neutrons is found.

Pacific storm may hit RP

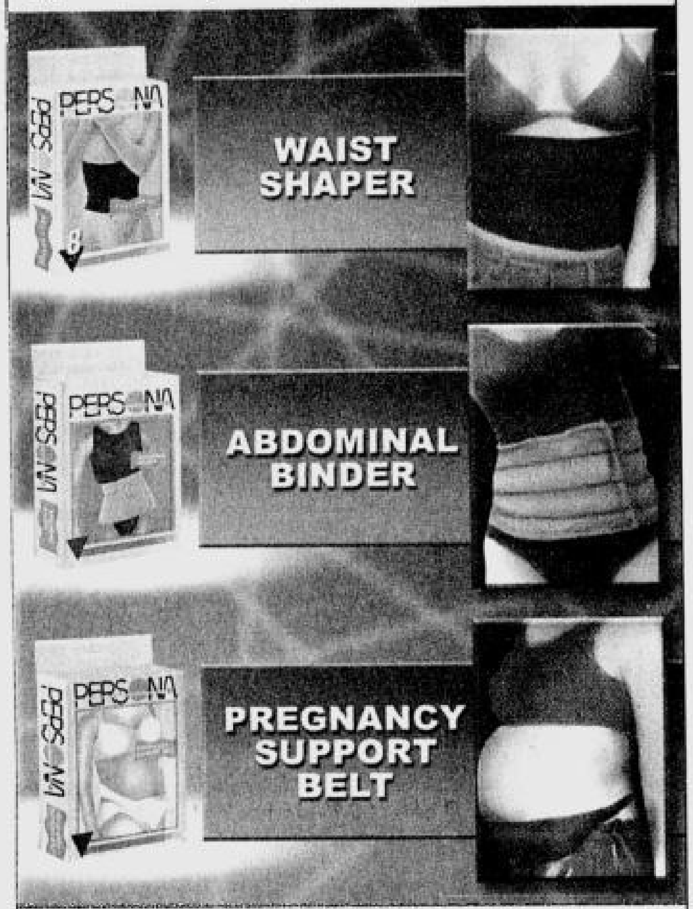
YAP, Federated States of Micronesia—Powerful typhoon "Mitag" slammed into Micronesia's Yap state Sunday but the atolls appear to have come off surprisingly lightly.

Authorities reported widespread light damage but no injuries or deaths.

The typhoon is expected to hit the nation of Palau next.

The Honolulu-based Joint Typhoon Warning Center said the typhoon hit Yap with 56 km per hour (30 knot) sustained winds gusting to 141 kph (76 knots), with seas producing waves seven meters high.

The typhoon is moving west-northwest toward the northern Philippines. *AFP*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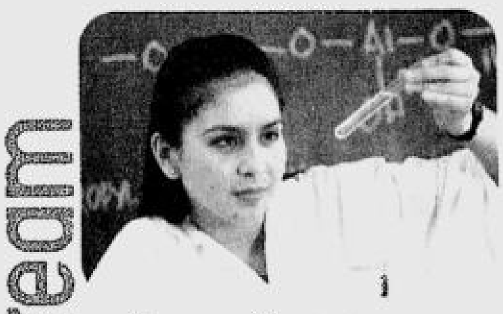

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Israelis sustain heavy toll in new attacks

A MASKED Palestinian gunman holds his weapons during an exchange of fire with Israeli troops inside the Jenin refugee camp, in the northern West Bank March 2. The European Union called on Saturday for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian refugee camps. REUTERS

JERUSALEM—Palestinian gunmen shot dead at least eight Israelis at an army roadblock in the West Bank on Sunday, some 12 hours after a Palestinian suicide bomber killed nine people in an ultra-Orthodox neighborhood of Jerusalem.

In the Gaza Strip, an Israeli was killed in a Palestinian shooting attack, Israeli security sources said. The body of an Israeli policeman was found earlier in the West Bank and police said he was killed by Palestinians.

The surge of bloodshed in the past few days has worsened a spiral of tit-for-tat violence and cast renewed doubt over international attempts to end a conflict in which more than 1,200 people have been killed in 17 months.

The mounting Israeli death toll was certain to increase public pressure on Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, whose popularity has plunged in opinion polls, to take tougher military action against the Palestinians.

Witnesses at the army roadblock near the Jewish settlement of Ofra said Palestinian gunmen poured down automatic weapons fire from surrounding hills. In addition to the eight Israelis killed in the attack, some 14 were wounded, rescue workers said.

"Three cars were lined up at the roadblock when suddenly there was intense gunfire," a witness, Rani Sagi, told Israel Radio.

The Jerusalem suicide bombing, which caused carnage in a crowded street filled with religious Jews leaving synagogues at the end of the Jewish sabbath on Saturday night, drew swift Israeli retaliation. *Reuters*

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Drug cocktail effective against cancer, scientists find

LONDON—British scientists have found that cancerous tumors can be killed off more effectively by using a "mix and match" combination of anti-cancer drugs.

Cancer Research UK scientists said on Sunday they had gained detailed data on exactly how treatments kill off cancer cells and that choosing different drugs that complemented each other stopped tumors from becoming resistant.

Anti-cancer drugs work by flicking a so-called "suicide switch" in each cancer cell, and resistance develops when this switch becomes jammed. The Birmingham-based researchers found the suicide switch that was targeted varied from one drug to another.

The research team focused on ovarian cancer, which often initially responds to chemotherapy but later develops a resistance. They treated ovarian tumors grown in a laboratory with a variety of anti-cancer drugs and found that different drugs activated different cell death molecules.

"Our research has allowed us to find out which switches are targeted by different drugs, so that we can learn to mix and match far more effectively than is currently possible," the team leader Prof. Lawrence Young said in a statement.

Scientists hope that choosing a cocktail of drugs to target different switches at once could prevent a tumor developing resistance to treatment.

Young said the research could pave the way for more effective anti-cancer drugs in the future.

The researchers also found they could make drug-resistant cancer cells sensitive to chemotherapy again by treating them with cell death molecules. They inserted one molecule, CD95L, into a virus, which was injected into resistant cancer cells.

They found it re-activated the cells' jammed suicide switches even though some of the switches had not been flicked. *Reuters*

Scandal, economy woes hit Koizumi

TOKYO—An alleged Japanese corruption scandal involving a ruling party lawmaker and worries over Japan's beleaguered economy are eroding voters' support both for Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), an opinion poll published on Sunday showed.

Few expect the slippage in Koizumi's once sky-high support to trigger his downfall soon, but analysts say the decline strengthens the hand of the LDP old guard who want him to put economic reforms on hold while taking steps to boost growth.

In a sign the Koizumi magic that last year lured voters back to the long-ruling LDP was fading, voters backing the party sank to 28 percent in a survey conducted on Friday and Saturday by the Asahi newspaper—down from 34 percent in February.

It was first fall below 30 percent since Koizumi—riding a wave of grass-roots support for his reform agenda—replaced the wildly unpopular Yoshiro Mori last April.

The decline in the LDP's popularity, however, did not translate into a significant boost for opposition parties, but instead appeared to be turning voters off politics in general, with just over half saying they backed no party at all.

Support for Koizumi's cabinet, which started sliding after he fired the popular Makiko Tanaka as foreign minister in January, fell to 44 percent from 49 percent in February. That compared to 40 percent who said they did not support his Cabinet.

The poll comes during a row between ruling and opposition parties over allegations that an influential LDP lawmaker, Muneo Suzuki, meddled in awarding government-funded contracts.

Suzuki, a member of the LDP's biggest faction and critic of Koizumi's reforms, has denied any wrong doing. *Reuters*

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Across the NATION

Assistant Editor **Tony Bergonia**

Mayor orders gold plants shut down

MONKAYO, Compostela Valley—Mayor Joel Brillantes has padlocked dozens of gold processing plants in the gold rush areas of Mt. Diwata here citing growing threats of pollution caused by mercury use.

Brillantes' JB Management owns one of the closed mining firms.

The other plants, which are being blamed for the pollution of various bodies of water here, are owned by Blucor, Babscor, BBL, and Bolex and several other groups owned by small-scale miners.

Until Wednesday, the gold processing firms defied Brillantes' cease-and-desist order.

Brillantes said he decided to padlock the plants and ordered its owners to relocate to Olaycon and Pasian villages because of the increasing pollution of the Naboc River.

Some 2,000 small-scale miners tried to defy the closure order, saying the pollution is caused by large mining corporations, which do not maintain tailings ponds or dump packs for their wastes. ***Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Clash looms between Tiglao, legislators over Charter change

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Samar Rep. Antonio Eduardo Nachura, chair of the House Committee on Constitutional Amendments, Saturday denied the claim of Presidential Spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao that the proponents of the move to amend the Constitution are motivated by ulterior or personal interests.

Nachura was reacting to news quoting Tiglao as having criticized the proponents of Charter change.

"The current move of Congress is to directly consult individuals and organizations on this issue and is definitely not borne out of personal interest but rather of a genuine desire to improve the socio-political condition of the country," Nachura said in a press conference here.

He said Tiglao was only stating his personal opinion and not the official stand of Malacañang because President Macapagal-Arroyo herself advised him to continue the consultations.

"It will be the people who will make the ultimate decision," he said.

"The bills and resolutions calling for either a constitutional convention or a constituent assembly will not be railroaded by Congress because we are determined to go to great lengths to determine the people's pulse," he said.

He suggested that Tiglao should instead focus on the issue itself and not on peripheral ones, like making inappropriate comments against those favoring charter amendments.

Calls for a change of the country's system of government from presidential to either parliamentary or federal system were aired Friday at a House of Representatives hearing on constitutional amendments held at the Provincial Administration Center in this city.

"The Constitution should march with the needs of the times to address the multitude of problems the country is facing today," Dr. Greg Tingson, a member of the 1971 and 1986 Constitutional Conventions, told the House Committee on Constitutional Amendments.

Tingson said he favors the holding of another Constitutional Convention to draft a new Charter creating a parliamentary or federal system of government.

George Sanchez and Cesar Villanueva, organizers of the Center for Research on Federalism or Sentro Pideral, batted for federalism, which they said is a form of government responsive to the call of the times.

Sentro Pideral proposes a shift from the present unitary system of government to a federal structure because "federalism emphasizes local initiative over national intervention in domestic affairs," Villanueva said.

"This form of government encourages ordinary citizens to take a more active participation to ensure efficient and responsive government in the regional level," he added.

The group Sanlakas, through its Negros representative Ariel Guides, however, said that any attempt to tamper with the Constitution will work against the people and only serve the interests of a few.

But Guides said the Sanlakas also believed that if Charter changes are made, these have to be done through a Constitutional Convention, where every sector is represented properly and proportionately according to their numbers.

The hearing in Bacolod City on Friday was the third for the committee. But unlike in Bacolod where there was opposition to Constitutional amendments, the participants in the hearings in Baguio and Iloilo cities were in favor of amending the Constitution, Nachura said.

Aside from the calls for a federal or parliamentary form of government, amendments to the Constitution also being pushed are the extension of elected officials' terms of office, and economic reforms that will allow among others foreign ownership of property in the Philippines.

Proposals for the President to have two four-year terms and for the election of senators by regions are also up for discussion, he said.

Nachura said his committee aims to present a report to the House on its hearings before the end of the year.

Iloilo City Rep. Raul Gonzalez, who support Charter changes, said the Philippines is the only country in Asia that has a presidential form of government yet it practices a multi-party system ideal for a parliamentary form of government.

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Chinese in Palawan questioned

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—The House Committee on foreign affairs smells something fishy in the presence of a Chinese national here.

"There's more than meets the eye," said committee chair Apolinario Lozada Jr. after questioning the resident Chinese, Lucio Ong, in a congressional inquiry here Saturday to shed light on the continuous intrusion of Chinese nationals in the Philippine territory particularly in Palawan waters.

Ong was grilled after he was charged with bribery for allegedly trying to offer P30,000 to the park rangers in exchange for the release of 95 Chinese fishermen who were caught in Tubbataha Reef National Marine Park last Feb. 1.

He was also suspected of coddling the Chinese fishermen caught on board two vessels in May last year.

These vessels were again caught in last month's arrests in Tubbataha.

Lozada said Ong is not an ordinary Chinese on fishing expedition in the Philippines.

He suspected that Ong was sent by his country to look into the situation in the Philippines, particularly in the disputed Kalayaan group of islands.

Ong, whose Chinese name is Xu Qingjiang, has been staying since 1995 in the municipality of Quezon.

He has a Filipino wife and owns a gasoline station and a grocery store.

Ong claimed that he came from Beijing through a travel agency but could not name which travel agency it was. He said his tourist visa was originally for 21 days but it was later extended until he got married to a Filipina named Nenita.

But Lozada insisted that it would be impossible for Ong to travel outside China without asking permission from the Communist Party because he was restricted.

The restriction, Lozada said, was only lifted several months ago when President Macapagal-Arroyo visited Beijing.

The year 1995, Lozada explained, is very important because this was the height of the territorial dispute in Kalayaan where China is one of the claimants. ***Jofelle P. Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Cargo vessel sinks; 1 missing, 17 saved

CEBU CITY—A crewmember was reported missing while 17 others were rescued by fishermen from a cargo vessel that sank off Aklan waters at dawn Sunday.

The MV Friendship 7, owned by the Premier Shipping Lines, was loaded with 18,000 bags of cement and was on its way to Iloilo City from Cebu when it sank at 4:45 a.m. in the waters 1.5 miles northeast off Barangay Fatima, New Washington, Aklan, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG)-Cebu station said.

Fishermen who happened to be in the area immediately went to the rescue of the sinking cargo ship's crewmembers but rescuers could not find one of the crewmen, identified as Servando Taveros, 63, up to yesterday.

Petty Officer 3 Adan Ayopela of the PCG-Cebu said the vessel sank after it took a different route, as it had ran aground earlier Saturday night.

The ship's captain, Jovito Cutamura, radioed the PCG-Cebu at 8:30 p.m. Saturday to inform it that the ship had ran aground but called back five minutes later to say that the vessel was afloat again, Ayopela said.

The ship captain also informed the Coast Guard that the vessel would be docking in an Aklan port instead of proceeding to Iloilo. However, shortly after 4 a.m. Sunday, the ship captain informed the PCG-Cebu that the vessel had developed mechanical trouble. The ship sank less than an hour later. ***Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau***

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Wounded civet cat bought by Army men

By Melvin Gascon
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DUPAX DEL SUR, Nueva Vizcaya—A wounded wild civet cat (*Macrogalidia musshenbroeki*), commonly known as *musang*, faces the danger of turning into a drinking appetizer (*pulutan*) after Army soldiers bought the animal from enterprising hunters here on Friday.

The foot-long wildcat, known locally as *mutit*, was chanced upon by this correspondent as it was being bargained off, together with a dead 10-foot long python (*sawa*), among soldiers belonging to the Army's 54th Infantry Battalion based here.

Requests of turning over the bleeding animal, which was stuffed in a small rice sack, to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources office here fell on deaf ears as the soldiers insisted on buying the *musang* for P250.

'Pulutan'

The soldiers, who appeared drunk, claimed they would not butcher the cat for *pulutan*.

"We are going to take care of it. I will bring it home to Nueva Ecija and have it live among my gamecocks to drive off evil spirits," said Army Sgt. Virgilio Manabat.

The INQUIRER tried to seek the help of Lt. Col. Felix Calimag, battalion commander, to prevent the sale of the animal. But an Army officer, who identified himself as 1st Leutenant Dawaten, said Calimag was at Camp Melchor de la Cruz in Isabela, headquarters of the Army's 5th Infantry Division.

The black wildcat, with shades of brown fur, has a wound on its left hind leg, which it sustained after it was caught by a booby trap.

Rice and corn farmer Ernesto Abangan, 51, who sold the animal, said he caught the *musang* in the forests of Sitio Akkon in Barangay Malasin, Dupax del Norte town, about 5 km from here.

Catch rate

On the average, Abangan said he catches one of such wildcats every month. He estimates to have caught about 30 since he started hunting "a few years ago."

With hunting as a form of pastime, Abangan said that aside from the *musang*, they have also caught wild pigs (*baboy damo*), lizards (*bayawak*), and deer.

The *musang*, together with other exotic animals found in the country's forests, is protected under Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act of 2001.

The law prohibits the killing, wounding, selling or collecting wildlife that are classified as "critical," "endangered" and "threatened."

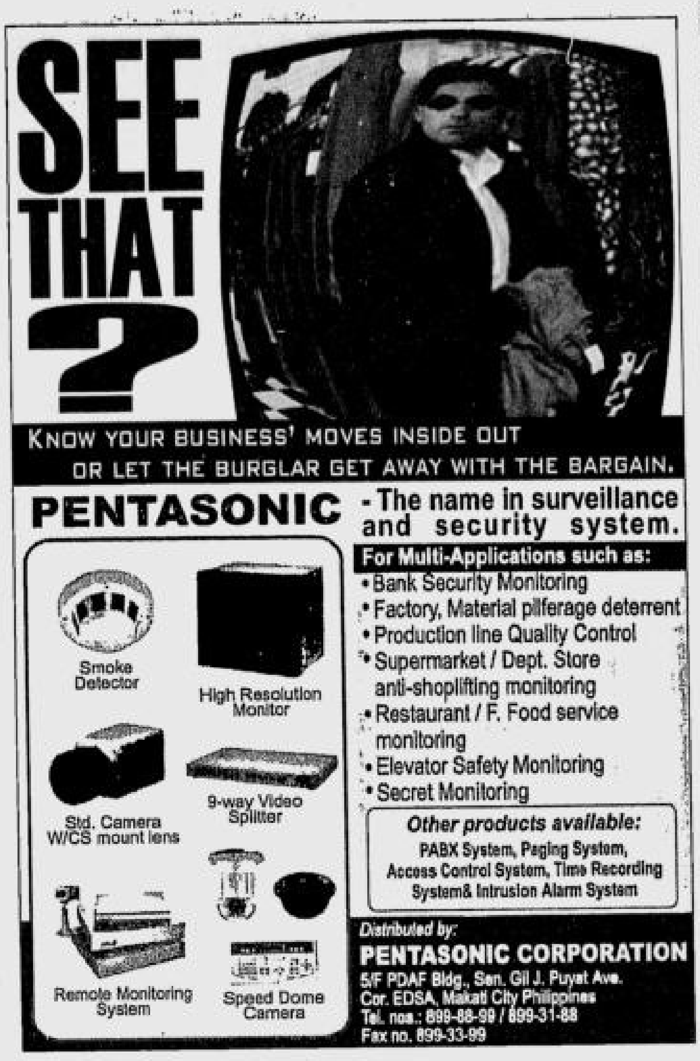
Violation of the law is punishable by imprisonment of 12 years or a fine of P1 million.

Taxpayers' discount

CALAPAN CITY—A discount awaits those who will pay their real property tax early, according to Oriental Mindoro assessor Onisimo Naling.

A 15-percent discount will be deducted if the real property tax for 2003 is paid this year. The discount is 10 percent if what is due for 2002 is settled up to the end of March.

However, Naling said, a 2-percent penalty will be imposed every month if the real property tax is not settled up to March 31. He also advised real property buyers who get their titles of ownership to submit their sworn declaration of property to the Provincial Assessor's Office within 60 days to avoid a penalty. ***Donna Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***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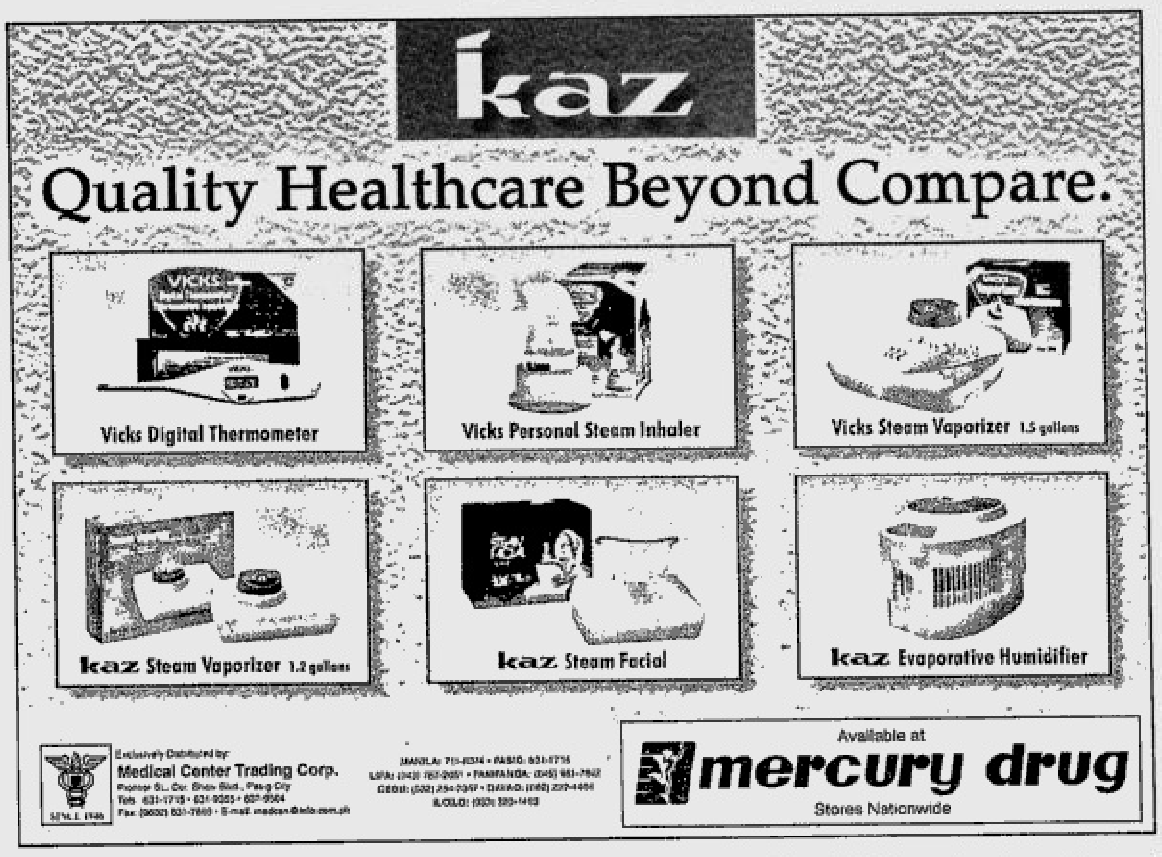
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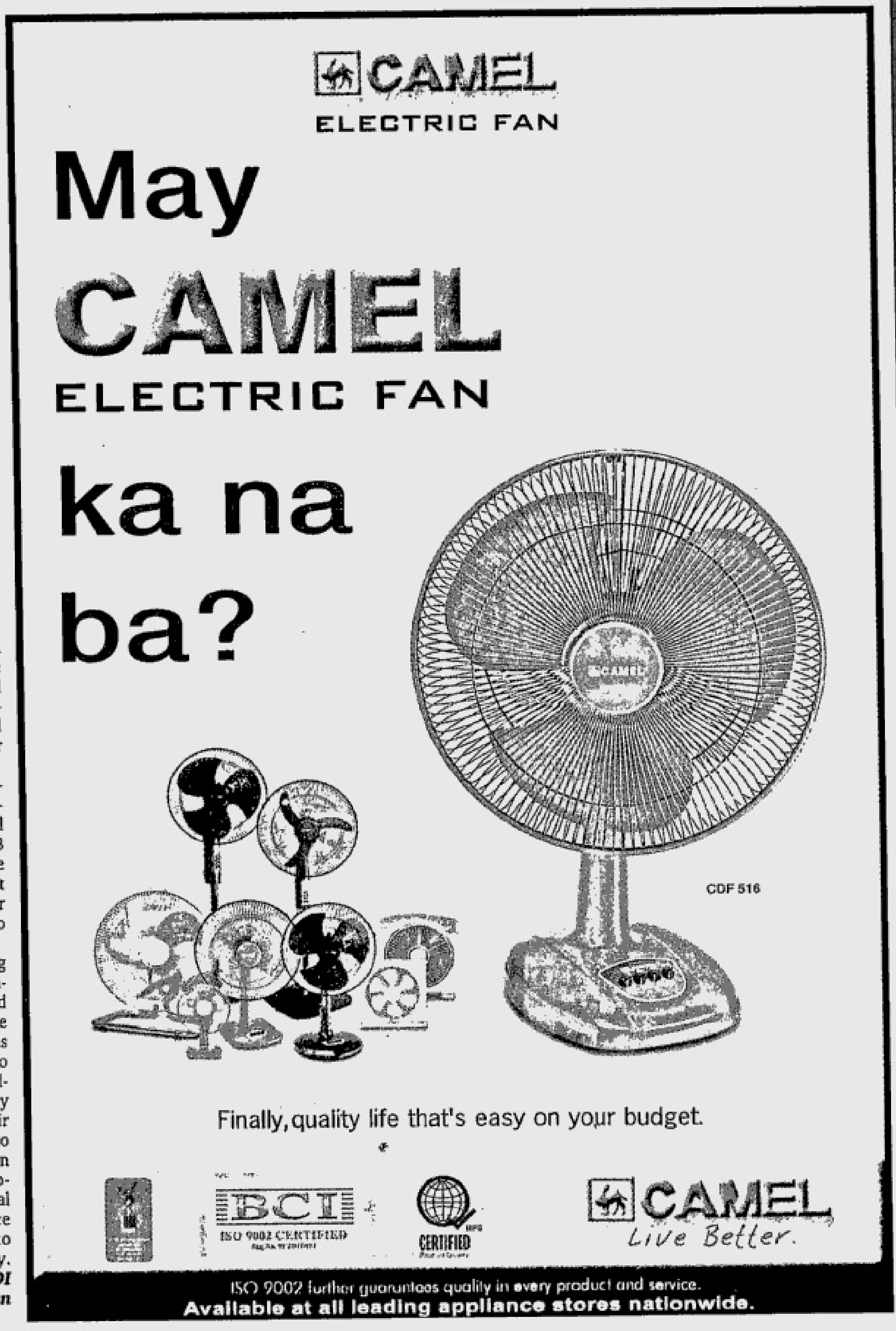
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Log checkpoints tagged 'cashpoints'

By Maurice Malanes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

CABARROGUIS, Quirino—Why do some people here refer to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources checkpoints, which are intended to check the transport of illegally cut timber, as "cashpoints?"

"Because some DENR personnel in-charge of these checkpoints allow timber poachers to pass through as long as they give cash to those manning these," a villager told a recent forum here on environmental issues.

"They (some DENR personnel) would even direct timber poachers to pass through another route and advise them on the best time to do so."

The revelation of the villager, who requested not to be identified, elicited soul-searching and reflection among DENR officials and personnel who attended the forum on Feb. 20 as panelists and participants.

Sponsored by the Philippine-German Community Forestry Project-Quirino (CFPQ), the forum presented case studies on the CFPQ's lessons from its community-based forest management programs, which began in 1991.

At first, the open forum centered on the case studies, which highlighted, among others, the importance of involving and organizing community folk to participate in replenishing logged-over forests.

But leaders and members of people's organizations eventually became bolder and opened up their sentiments, many of them saying problems such as timber poaching could be stamped out if only some DENR personnel do their jobs and live up to their mandate of protecting the environment and natural resources.

To help ease the tension the discussion created, Dionisio Tolentino Jr., technical director of the office of the undersecretary of environment and natural resources operations, said some DENR checkpoints are real checkpoints "because they also accept checks" as bribes for poached timber.

A panelist in the forum, Tolentino revealed the same common complaints from concerned citizens against the 87 DENR checkpoints nationwide.

"The problem is much worse in the Caraga Region (in Mindanao) where 200 truckloads of logs are transported daily," he said.

Tolentino suggested a "re-orientation" of DENR officials and personnel, many of whom, he said, have to have a "paradigm shift" that abhors corruption.

Despite some "bad eggs" in the DENR, the department is not lacking in good, honest and sincere people, who get hurt every time the "bad eggs" spoil the DENR, he said.

"It pains me to hear such information (about checkpoint bribe-takers) because I, for one, lost (a portion) of my leg while doing my duty as a DENR forester," said Celso Diaz, DENR environment and research bureau director.

"Our secretaries come and go, but we in the bureaucracy remain, doing our jobs quietly and sincerely," he said.

Big-time corporate logging stopped in Quirino after a ban on commercial logging was imposed in 1993.

Compared to other provinces, Quirino still has a 63-percent forest cover, which is bigger than the forest cover of other provinces in Luzon.

The Philippine-German CFPQ seeks to mobilize communities, mostly inhabited by migrant settlers from the Cordillera, to rehabilitate logged-over areas through community-based forest management schemes.

2 factories in Clark shut down, lay off more than 700 workers

CLARK FIELD, Pampanga—More than 700 workers in this special economic zone lost their jobs last month after the closure of two Taiwanese bag manufacturers.

The 475 workers of Shunta International Corp. have sought the help of the Clark Development Corp. (CDC) to ask Shunta officials to release their full separation pay.

The workers complained that Shunta officials offered them only half of their monthly salary for every year of service in the company.

The Labor Code of the Philippines mandates that an employee who was laid off should receive a full month salary for every year of service. The computation is based on the worker's latest monthly salary.

The Shunta workers were laid off on Feb. 20.

Some 300 employees of Homeshun International also lost their jobs after the company decided to close shop on Feb. 22 due to losses.

The CDC is negotiating with the management of the two firms to provide the full benefits of the laid off workers.

Lawyer Ethel de Guzman, manager of the CDC labor services department, told the INQUIRER on Tuesday that her office was verifying the number of workers who lost their jobs in the two Taiwanese bag manufacturers.

She said about 22,000 workers are employed by 311 foreign and local business locators inside this special economic zone.

Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Timber poaching continues in Bukidnon

MALAYBALAY CITY—Despite a logging moratorium in Bukidnon, a total of 439 cases of timber poaching were filed in court last year.

Some of the cases were dismissed while others are still pending.

The logging moratorium in Bukidnon began in 1990.

Belino Epi, chief of the Forest Management Section of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office in Bukidnon, told the INQUIRER that the cases involved only timber poaching, not illegal logging, as the machineries used in the cutting of trees were crude.

Epi also denied reports of illegal logging in Bukidnon. He said logs seized earlier came from Lanao del Sur from people using the Bukidnon route in transporting the logs.

But Epi admitted that due to a shortage of forest rangers, timber-poaching in Bukidnon continues.

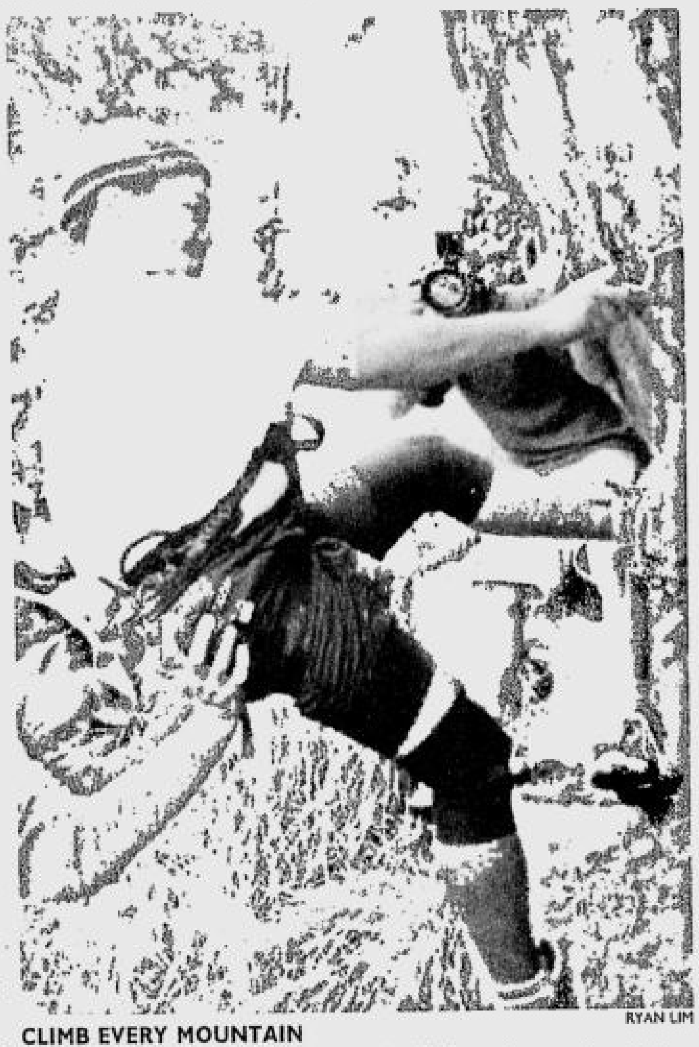
"Apart from being few, they are also prone to bribery due to the meager salary they are receiving," Epi said.

There are only 68 forest rangers in Bukidnon, which has a forest cover of some 500,000 hectares of land.

He said he could not blame environment groups that call his office inutile, but added that these groups should also look into the records.

He said illegal logging in the province has been reduced.

Last year, only two confiscations were recorded in the towns of Pangantucan and Don Carlos. ***Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau***



RYAN LIM

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Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol leads climbers in a project that will rid Mt. Apo of trash, and perhaps give him some "pogi" points, too.

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Group offers talks to solemnize same sex relationship

BAGUIO CITY—A gender rights advocacy group here has offered to negotiate the "tribal solemnization" of a lesbian relationship with the couple's tribal elders in Mt. Province.

Lynn Madalang, executive director of Ebgan Inc., said the couple is among the gay relationships that are openly accepted by tribal communities in the Cordillera.

Madalang, a Mt. Province resident, have been collecting case studies on open gay relationships around the region in the last decade to see how and why indigenous communities are less hostile to homosexual relationships compared to contemporary Filipino society.

Among these are three case studies on lesbian couples in Bila Village in Bauko, Mt. Province, whose ages range from 25 to 50 years old.

"The oldest couple has been recognized in tribal litanies as an existing family unit, and it has been accorded proper respect by the village elders. In fact, I am still trying to determine how much of the local customs apply to the couples, but there is no doubt the way they are treated by the village is far better than the treatment of gay couples by present society," Madalang said in Filipino.

None of these case studies, however, shed light on whether the couples were required by tribal customs to undergo tribal weddings.

Ebgan plans "to test the waters" by helping a young Cordillera lesbian couple initiate talks with tribal elders about holding their version of a gay marriage.

The group had kept the couple's identities and their community confidential since December last year, when they first revealed their plans to the INQUIRER.

But Letty Miana, Ebgan in-house counselor, said the potentials of a same-sex tribal marriage could also provide some measure of progress to many gender rights issues.

Apart from a proposed Magna Carta for Gays and Lesbians filed by Aurora Rep. Bellaflor Angara-Castillo, around 200 measures were filed and then shelved between 1995 and 2000, including two controversial measures on abortion and divorce, according to women's rights groups.

Ebgan said Philippine laws do not outlaw "homosexuality," in principle.

But homosexuality is cited twice in the Family Code: As a reason for marital separation in Article 55 and as a reason for marital annulment in Article 45. ***Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Bicol region, Eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi30° Lo 20°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 23° Lo 13°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 18°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 19°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 21°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 29° Lo 18°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 28° Lo 23°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 20°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 22°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	Hi 29° Lo 24°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 22°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 22°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 22°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 20°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 20°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/03/04/02

ROUNDUP

Man killed in fire

CABANATUAN CITY—A man was killed in an hour-long fire that swept through a residential area in San Isidro, Nueva Ecija, on Friday morning. Police identified the fatality as Ernesto Calanoc, 38. His relatives failed to save him from the fire that started near the public market. Police said the fire razed nine houses and destroyed about P2 million in property.

Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk

School principal nabbed

LIGAO CITY—Police arrested a 68-year-old elementary school principal for allegedly raping a laundrywoman inside his house in Barangay Bay here. Chief of police Wilson Asueta said Artemio Balobar, principal of the Cabasi Elementary School, was charged with rape by a 27-year-old widow who had been regularly washing his clothes. The victim told police that on Feb. 7, Balobar asked her to go to his house to do the laundry. She said Balobar was already drunk when she came. While she was washing the clothes, she said Balobar asked her to go inside the house where she was raped. Judge Aurora Parcia recommended no bail for Balobar.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Nur's jail fence rammed

STA. ROSA, Laguna—Policemen guarding jailed former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Gov. Nur Misuari in Fort Sto. Domingo here scrambled to their battle stations when a 10-wheel truck rammed the camp's perimeter fence on Thursday. At least four members of the police elite Special Action Force were immediately at the scene when the incident occurred. Ryan Edison, 20, of Cabanatuan City, the truck driver, told police that he lost his brakes while negotiating the road along Barrio Sto. Domingo. The truck plowed into a jeep and a Toyota Corolla car, badly damaging both vehicles before crashing into the fence. The drivers and passengers in the two other vehicles suffered injuries. Edison was detained at the Sta. Rosa municipal jail while a case of reckless imprudence resulting in multiple physical injuries was being prepared against him.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Watershed areas protected

LEGAZPI CITY—Environment regional executive director Oscar Hamada said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has implemented various water and soil conservation measures in four of the region's priority watershed areas to prevent soil erosion and improve the areas' water-holding capacity. These are the Wares River Watershed in Iriga City, Pulang Duta Watershed in Magallanes, Sorsogon, Bañadero River Watershed in Mobo, Masbate, and Ragay Watershed in Camarines Sur.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

3,433 child centers

LEGAZPI CITY—The Department of Social Welfare and Development has established 3,433 day-care centers for children in 2,930 barangays or 85 percent of the total 3,457 barangays in Bicol. Local government units subsidize the centers. DSWD regional director Consolacion Arafiles said that through the centers, the department aims to develop the children's ability and intellectual skills so that they can interact not only with their immediate family members but also with other persons outside their home. She said the kind and quality of care given during the first six years of a child's life determines what he or she will be as a youth or as an adult.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Fisheries output grows

PILI, Camarines Sur—The Bureau of Agricultural Statistics said fisheries production in Bicol has increased by about 31 percent. BFAR regional director Josefina Delfin attributed the increase to the massive fingerling dispersal and other measures undertaken by the bureau. With these moves, the BFAR aims to promote livelihood and fisheries resource management like the establishment of fish sanctuaries and marine reserves at the local level. Bicol ranks second to Central Luzon in fisheries production nationwide. ***Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

7 mini hydro plants

LEGAZPI CITY—The Catanduanes provincial government is planning to develop seven mini hydroelectric power plants in the province capable of supplying a total of 10 megawatts of electricity. With additional electric power, Gov. Leandro Verceles Jr. said, the provincial government hopes to provide free electricity to farmers during daytime to enable them to operate their electric pumps in their irrigation systems to meet their farms' irrigation needs. Verceles said his administration is in full blast in its program to energize the villages.

PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Ex-mayor held for not filing list of assets

By Vicente S. Labro
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—May this serve as a warning to public officials and employees who take lightly the filing of their statements of assets and liabilities (SAL).

A man who had served for 16 years as town mayor in Leyte was arrested by the police by virtue of a warrant issued by the Sandiganbayan for two pending graft cases over his failure to submit his SAL while he was in office.

The former mayor, Jose Martinez, had to spend Thursday night in jail, as he could no longer post the required bail bond on the day he was arrested.

Martinez, who served as mayor of Sta. Fe, Leyte from 1980 to 1996, was arrested at around 6:30 p.m. Thursday on the strength of a warrant issued Feb. 14, 2002. It was signed by Associate Justice Edilberto Sandoval, chair of the Sandiganbayan's Second Division.

The warrant also stated that the Sandiganbayan has issued a hold departure order against Martinez on March 17, 1997 because of his cases.

The Sandiganbayan's warrant was received by the city police station here on Feb. 27. The police arrested Martinez in his residence on Sta. Cruz Street, this city.

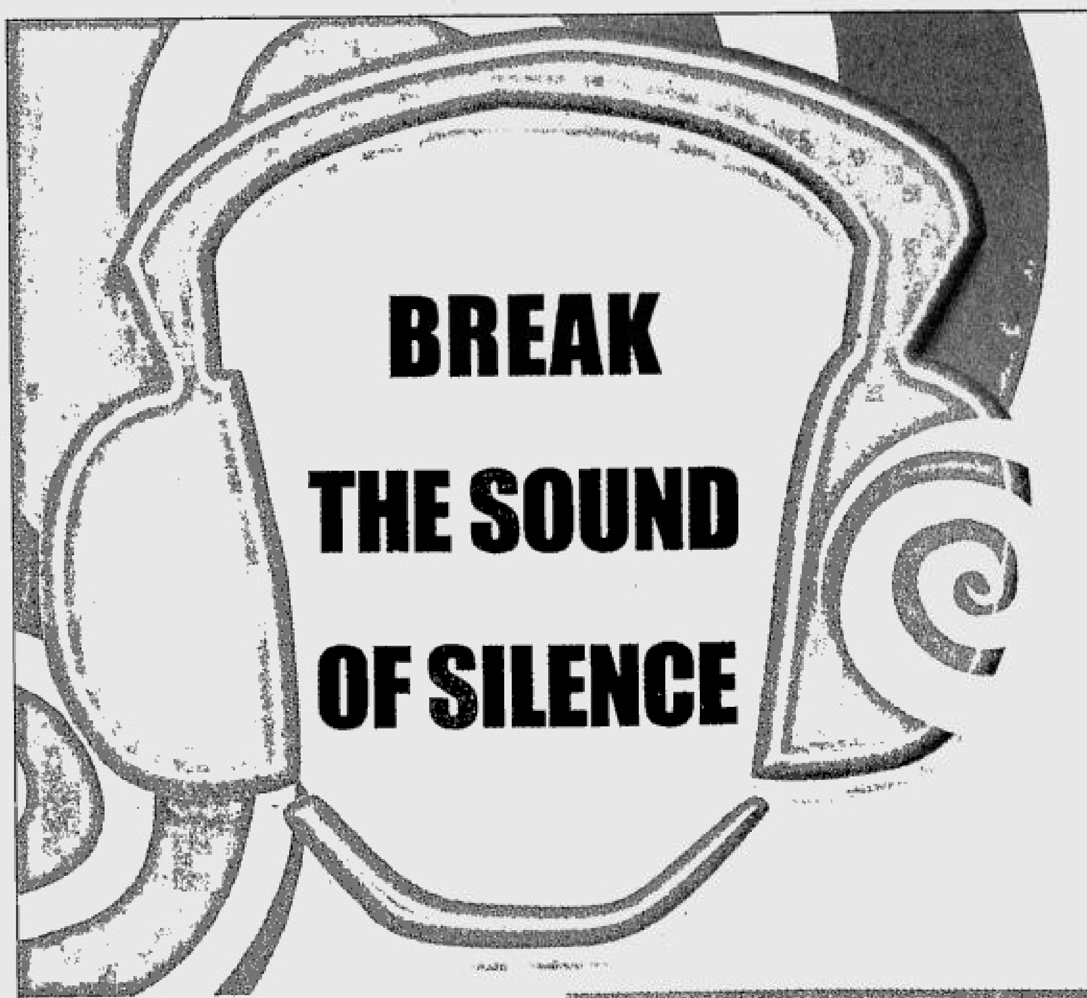
Because it was already evening when he was arrested, the former mayor of Sta. Fe town, some 18 kilometers from Tacloban, had to spend the night in jail for he was unable to post bail.

Martinez was able to leave jail on Friday morning, after he posted the required bail bond of P5,000 for each of his two cases at the office of the clerk of court of the regional trial court here.

The warrant did not give details on the cases against Martinez except to state that he is facing two cases, both for violation of Section 8 of Republic Act 6713, which the Ombudsman Visayas filed before the Sandiganbayan.

RA 6713 establishes the code of conduct and ethical standards for public officials and employees.

Section 8 of the Act states that "public officials and employees have an obligation to accomplish and submit declarations under oath of . . . liabilities, net worth and financial and business interests including those of their spouses and of unmarried children under 18 years of age living in their households."



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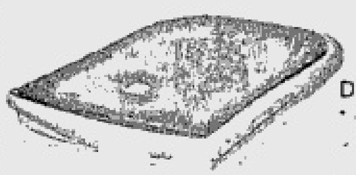

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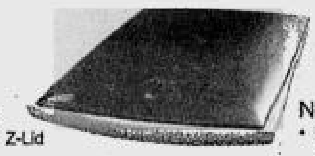

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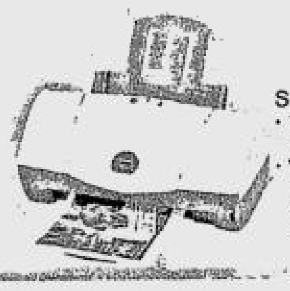

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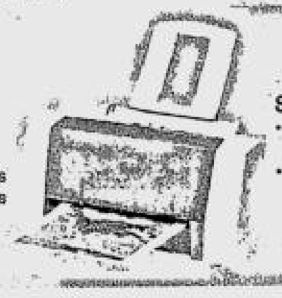

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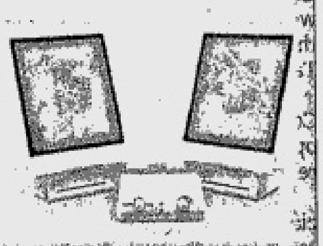

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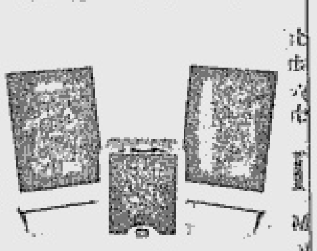

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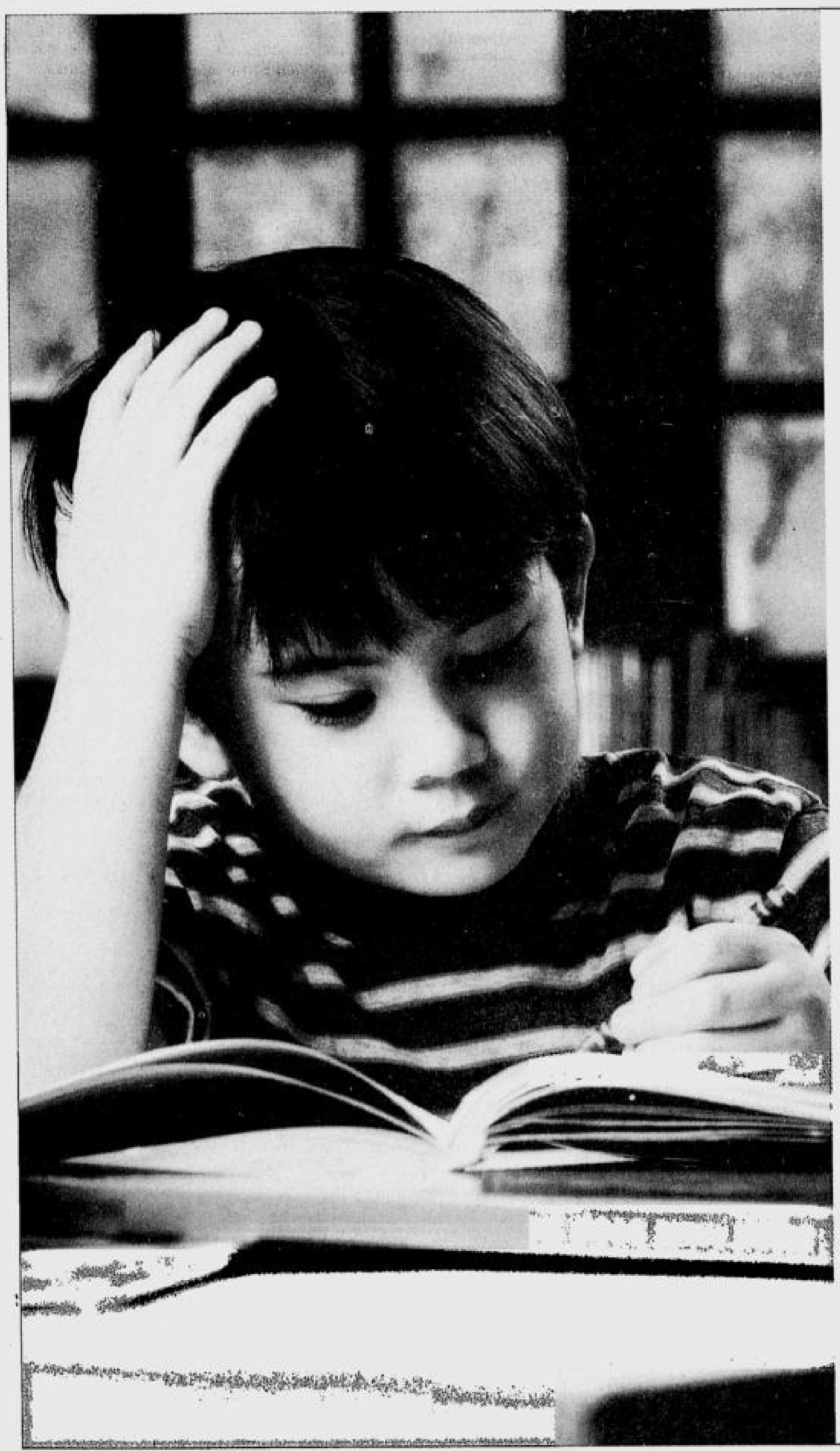

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Legazpi health officials see rise in sexual diseases

LEGAZPI CITY—The heat of summer is barely beginning to be felt here but health officials are already raising a warning against a post-Christmas holiday blue—an expected rise in sexually transmitted diseases (STD), specifically gonorrhea and non-gonococcal infections (NGI).

The STD section of the Legazpi City Health Office disclosed that there were 13 cases of gonorrhea and 7 NGIs in January alone.

But initial records of gonococcal infections in February have almost doubled, with 25 already confirmed by microscopic examinations.

Smear tests will further ascertain these cases.

In the post-Christmas season (first quarter) of 2001 some 50 cases of gonorrhea and 96 NGIs were registered.

NGI cases rose to 156 in the next quarter but gonorrhea dipped to 38.

These figures bounced back (gonorrhea, 58, and NGI, 72) in the post-summer season in the third quarter.

Among male patients, gonorrhea manifests itself in painful urination, genital pus discharges and pain in the navel area. If not treated promptly, it could lead to infertility.

Among women, the infection causes yellowish vaginal discharges with a fishy smell, pain and sometimes, bloody intercourse.

Complications may include pelvic inflammatory diseases, ectopic pregnancy, infertility and abortion.

Other complications may affect the offspring like still birth, low birth weight, infant blindness and death.

Most of those tested positive were males in their 20s and 30s. Others were guest relations officers (GRO) and housewives, including an infant.

Bacterial vaginosis, trichomoniasis and genital warts are some of the other STD infections that were also registered.

Loreilei Ballesteros, head of the STD section, told the Inquirer that after the summer fiestas and Christmas holiday season, sexual infections indeed register marked increases, based on their records.

Ballesteros said that although some of their patients are transients and not residents of this city, a certain level of success in controlling STD has been achieved through their education and information campaigns and direct medical help.

She said that because of their efforts, their office has been made a regional referral center for sexually transmissible infection (STI) treatment and management, STI and HIV surveillance and reporting, and gonorrhea sensitivity tests. ***Roly Embile, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

David-Goliath clash grips farm claimed by firm, clan

POLOMOLOK, South Cotabato—A tribal clan has accused a multinational firm here of using its influence to oppress poor landowners.

On Wednesday morning, at least 15 armed guards of Dole Philippines backed by a team of policemen from the Polomolok Police Command, uprooted the newly planted corn of the Latimban clan on a 24-hectare disputed land in Sitio Akfeg, Barangay Maligo here.

There was no demolition order from the court. Eddie Basquinez, clerk of court of the Regional Trial Court Branch 39 in Polomolok, confirmed that only a Temporary Restraining Order was issued by the court.

Maria Latimban, leader of the clan, told the Inquirer that Dolefil's guards also demolished the clan's two shanties.

Maria claimed that the multinational pineapple firm has started harassing their clan when they turned down the company's request to lease the area that they are occupying.

"We have been deprived of our rights over this land for quite a long time. We want first to partake of the fruits (of) our land before leasing it to someone else," she told the Inquirer.

Dolefil has an existing lease contract with the Tribal Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Cooperative (Tarebco) represented by a certain Fred Malumpong over Lots 47 and 48.

The contract, which the Latimban clan claimed was highly questionable, is due to expire in 2004.

In a letter dated Nov. 6, 2001 sent to lawyer Roque Agton Jr., regional director of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) in Southern Mindanao, Danilo Solamo, NCIP provincial director for South Cotabato, said that the land division of Dolefil has not been cautious in entering into lease contracts with the Tarebco group, which is not the real owner of the lots.

Solamo also said the Tarebco group was demanding P25,000 to P50,000 before it executes quit claims being asked by the Dolefil's legal counsel.

On Sept. 27 last year, Agton wrote a letter to Dolefil's legal counsel Melquiades Hernandez informing Hernandez that the Latimban clan is the legitimate and lawful owner of Lots 47 and 48.

The area was part of the Latimban clan's ancestral land.

The Latimban clan claimed that last Wednesday's demolition was illegal, as what was issued by Judge Eddie Rojas of the Regional Trial Court Branch 39 in this town was only a Temporary Restraining Order.

The Latimban clan was even questioning the propriety of the issuance of the TRO as they claimed it was apparently issued with haste.

On Feb. 26, Dolefil filed an urgent motion for the issuance of a TRO.

Based on court records, the motion was received at 11 a.m. on Feb. 26. The TRO came out in the afternoon of the same day.

In his order, Rojas said the court was convinced that it was urgent to grant the motion to prevent grave injustice and irreparable injury on Dolefil.

The Latimban clan received the TRO at around 8 a.m. on Feb. 27 together with a summons, giving them 15 days to answer the motion filed by Dolefil.

"What was the use of giving us a 15-day grace period to file our counter-motion when the TRO had already been issued?" they said.

In its motion, Dolefil questioned the Latimban clan's ownership of the land.

The company also claimed that the Latimbans were harassing and preventing the company from undertaking agricultural operations in the controversial area.

But the Latimbans denied the Dolefil's accusations.

"We are not in the position to harass them. Only one of the eight members of the Latimban clan is male. The rest are female. Who are we to harass a multinational firm?" Maria said. ***Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Greek faces 5 raps for molesting boys in Isabela

SANTIAGO CITY—For sexually abusing five boys aged 11-12, a 24-year-old Greek was charged with rape and violation of the anti-child abuse law before the prosecutor's office here last week.

Supt. Renato Turingan, police chief here, said police arrested Michael Deligiannes, a native of Athens, in a hotel here on Feb. 19 while he was molesting two boys.

Police said Deligiannes, who uses the pseudonym Mike Smith and who is staying in Barangay Calaocan here, has been posing as a missionary but could not present documents to prove his claim.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development's Lingap Center took under its custody Deligiannes' two victims while the three other boys were brought to their parents.

Deligiannes posted a P120,000 bail bond on Tuesday and was temporarily released from jail.

Police records showed that Deligiannes molested one of the boys 13 times and another boy six times. The incidents reportedly occurred in different places in Santiago City, La Union, Olongapo City and Cauayan City when Deligiannes took the boys with him, in the guise of teaching them religious values.

Police said Deligiannes had given the boys P100 each.

Assistant City Prosecutor Alexander de Guzman asked the Department of Justice to issue a "very urgent" motion for the processing of a hold departure order against Deligiannes. ***Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

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ANGELES CITY—How much will it cost a citizen to help a malnourished child improve his or her learning capability in school?

Only P8 a day, or an average of P200 a month, according to children's advocate Jamby Madrigal, who is replicating in the country former United States Sen. George McGovern's "Feed the Child" project in Latin America.

"We cannot begin to educate until we address malnutrition," Madrigal said of the 46-percent malnutrition rate plaguing millions of public elementary school students in the country today.

Madrigal, former presidential adviser on children's welfare during the Estrada administration, said the project's long-term goal is "to empower the female child, the future women."

"It seeks to discourage uneducated women who, because of poverty, are dropped by their parents from school or who, because of malnutrition, end up learning less," she explained.

Madrigal and members of the Able Foundation and the Samahang Kakampi Foundation were here Wednesday to seek support from local civil groups.

Both foundations are introducing the feeding project in other parts of the country after the pilot project that they began in June last year at the Lupang Pangako Elementary School in Payatas, Quezon City showed positive results for the children.

The Integrated Midwives Association of the Philippines, a partner in the project, said the weight of the kids as well as their memory retention skills improved during the last three months.

The National Nutrition Council also helped by providing nutrition education seminars to the parents of the children.

The Southridge Fathers Group sponsored the free lunches for the Payatas children. Domestic helpers abroad and retired teachers are among the growing number of donors.

"It only takes a few pesos to reach out to malnourished children. Anybody, young or old, can do his or her share to end malnutrition. It does a lot for our future citizens, especially women," Madrigal told reporters here.

In Iloilo City, the Philippine Jaycees has begun a fund-raising campaign in private schools to support the local "Feed the Child" project, she said.

Donations for the project can be coursed through the Able and Samahang Kakampi foundations at Room 307, Seneca Plaza, 1152 E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon City. It can be reached through telephone numbers (02) 4136831 and 4152403. ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Bamboo gives Bulacan town folk, execs hope vs floods

OBANDO, Bulacan—To lessen the adverse effects of flooding in this town, local and church officials have started to solicit bamboo that they plan to use as anti-flooding devices.

The bamboo, collected through the project "Kawayang Handog Mo, Pigil Baha sa Lugar Mo," will be made into temporary retaining walls in the town's waterways to prevent floodwaters from entering the villages during the rainy season and during high tides.

Mayor Onesimo Joaquin said eight of the 11 Obando villages experience heavy flooding during heavy rains and high tides.

Joaquin said residents staying on rooftops are a common sight in Obando whenever flood strikes the coastal town.

He said the bamboo retaining walls will be installed along the banks of the Binuangan River. Waters from the river drain into Manila Bay and into the waterways of eight villages here, especially in Barangays Lawa, Paco and Tawiran.

Joaquin said they initiated the project to tap the help of residents who are directly affected by floods.

"Most of the residents in Obando are affected by floods during the rainy season and high tide. They should contribute to fight floods . . . so we can live comfortably," he said.

Joaquin said they will resort to this measure until the government completes various flood control measures designed for the town and other coastal towns along the Manila Bay.

Joaquin said personnel at the municipal hall and at the parish church of Paco will accept the bamboo contributions from residents. ***Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Election body drafts 'rules of engagement'

From page A1

some sign of sanity" in the heated en banc sessions of the Comelec, the perennially bickering election officials have agreed to draft a set of guidelines to govern their behavior during the weekly meetings.

Two commissioners representing the two rival camps in the Commission had been assigned to draft the rules.

Commissioner Resurreccion Borra said the draft was already being circulated among the seven commissioners for their comments.

"We have to maintain some sign of sanity in parliamentary order," the jolly Borra said at a press briefing held last week when he was assigned commissioner-in-charge before Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo left for abroad.

In an earlier briefing, Borra had admitted that the bickering between the camps of Benipayo and Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco was "a repetitive and almost daily problem in the Comelec."

Benipayo, Borra and Florentino Tuason were appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo, while Tancangco, Rufino Javier, Mehol Sadain and Ralph Lantion were nominated by then President Joseph Estrada.

Asked why the infighting continued despite the many electoral challenges facing the collegial body, Borra, a former executive director of the Comelec, replied: "Each one of us has his/her respective mind."

The two camps recently filed separate motions before the Supreme Court, both claming to represent the Comelec's official position, concerning the implementation of the Voters Registration and Identification System.

Benipayo, whose confirmation as Comelec chair has been repeatedly bypassed by the Commission on Appointments, asked the high court to reverse a ruling by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court compelling the Comelec to honor its contract with the Photokina-led consortium for the VRIS.

His petition, filed by the Office of the Solicitor General, was endorsed by Borra and Tuason, but submitted without the prior knowledge or approval of the Comelec en banc.

BENIPAYO

This prompted Tancangco and her allies to submit a manifestation asking the high tribunal to deny Benipayo's petition, because it did not represent the position of the majority in the Comelec.

"Apparently (Benipayo's camp has) recognized that the source of all these problems come from the en banc, and so Commissioners Javier and Tuason were designated to come out with internal guidelines that will rule the en banc," Tancangco told reporters earlier.

Borra said the guidelines would define which matters needed an en banc resolution and which the Comelec chair alone in his administrative capacity could decide.

These should be "out" soon, he added.

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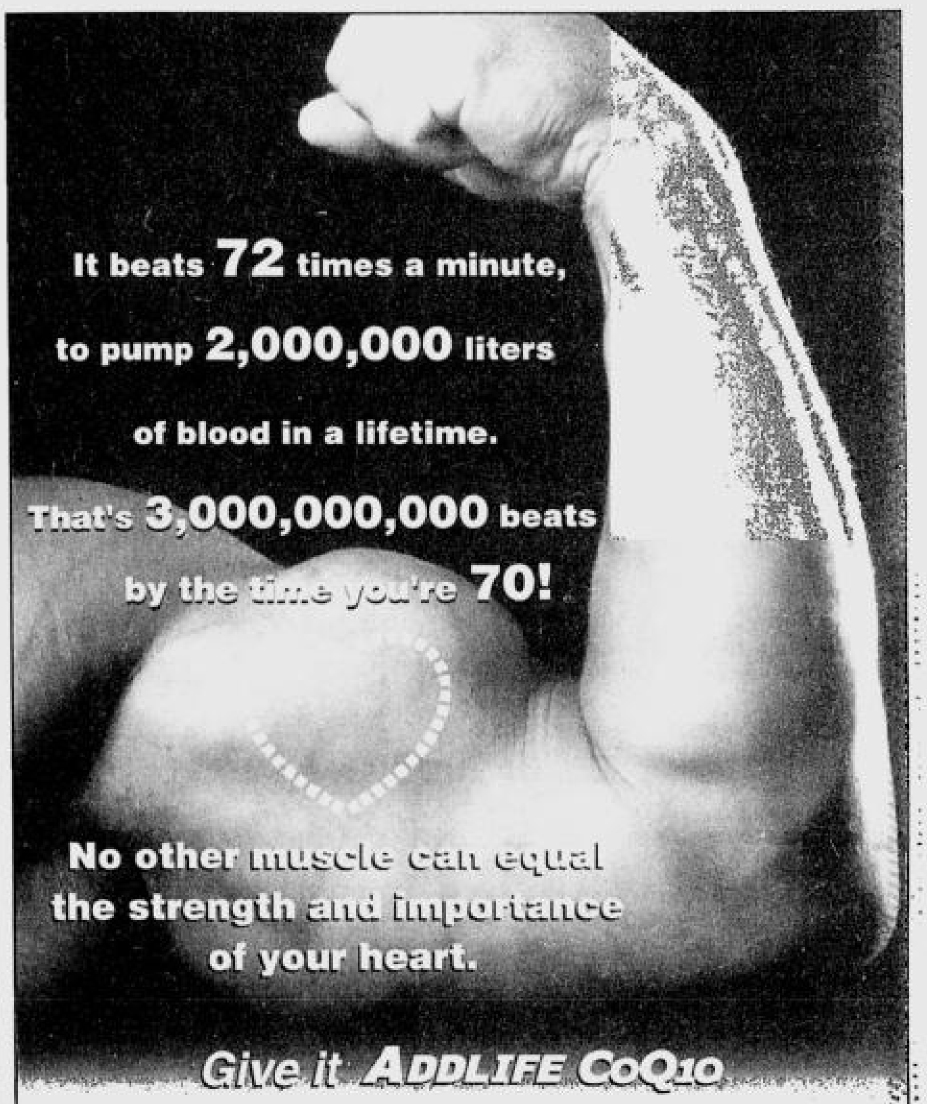
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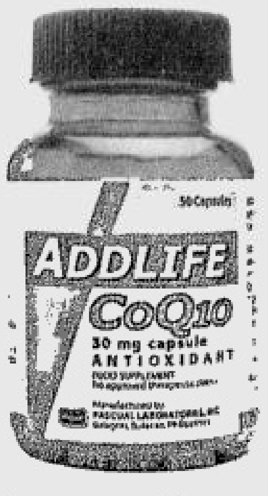

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Salarda case: New face of spouse abuse

From page A1

anonymity.

Those who knew her life story—distant kin, a few friends, and workers at the women's crisis center managed by the Touch Foundation where she had often sought refuge as early as July last year—knew that in life, Carlson and Salarda suffered a common fate.

Last year, Salarda was assaulted at least twice and sought legal remedy for her injuries. The first case is now at the city prosecutor's office for resolution and the second with the volunteer team at the Xavier University College of Law's Legal Assistance Program.

For a few days in August 2001, Salarda and her stepsons even took temporary shelter after her former partner, who by then had a new lover, threatened them with bodily harm.

Unlike Carlson, Salarda was consistent about what she wanted to do with her abuser: financial support to feed the man's two kids.

For the past eight months or so, with some assistance from the women's support center, she pursued the paper trail needed to have two cases of physical injuries and grave threats filed with the courts.

Women of lesser stuff could have easily called it quits, but she didn't.

She took time to take care of herself. Sometimes, she also helped a friend sell bread at the Cogon market. When sales were brisk, she got P40 a day. Most of the time, the take-home pay was less but at least she had enough for the children's fare to and from school the next day.

The last day she was seen alive, she had taken a ride on borrowed fare money to get to her ex-lover's place, to ask for the much-delayed monthly support.

Model survivor

Monang stood as a role model for the community of survivors assisted by the crisis center. In forums, such as one with the Ramon Magsaysay awardee Oung Chantal of Cambodia and another at an art exhibit on women's bodies, she always exhorted others to take courage, to assert, to not be afraid to speak their mind, even as she flashed a toothless smile.

Where did such courage stem from? Salarda had also been a street activist and unionist, being among the workers who staged a strike at the Ororama Department Store in the early 1990s.

With her death, many questions have been raised.

Who brutalized her, and why? Did Monang, and all other women victims, ever receive advice to couple their courage with caution? Is it possible for women's crisis centers to integrate a livelihood component so that destitute women do not have to beg for financial support and subject themselves to repeated harm?

Monang lived within the city and its environs, which was the site of a much-quoted study showing the prevalence of domestic violence in Northern Mindanao.

A project of the Research Institute for Mindanao Cultures (Rimcu) at Xavier University here, the study recorded interviews with 1,600 women in 1999 conducted by Magdalena Cabaraban and Beethoven Morales.

In the context of that study, Monang the nobody gives a face to every woman who is battered and abused in their very homes today. The saga of her life gives local color to a social ill that, as United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan has acknowledged, is now "a global phenomenon."

"Ending Violence Against Women and Girls," a research project of the Johns Hopkins University Population Program covering over 50 population surveys, shows that the phenomenon and its causes are similar around the world, even as figures differ.

Media reporting

But even as Salarda's body was buried in simple rites last week, the local media continued to feast on her story, trying to find every salacious morsel of fact about her death.

Can something be done by media advocates so that radio stations and tabloids transform themselves, and instead of the sensationalist stuff they churn out daily, elevate the discussion to issues of policy advocacy and proactive community action against violence?

The media can go beyond just keeping Salarda's murder in the public consciousness by a daily blow-by-blow account of the ongoing NBI investigation, but also in the discussion of the manifestations of the problem in the city; and what the government and civil society has done, or not done, to confront it.

Monang's death, so unforeseen and so sudden, has forced groups to confront the nature of their advocacy and the certainty of danger that domestic violence poses to its victims. In one report on domestic violence, Nigerian journalist and CNN awardee Wanja Githingi aired a chilling lament: "We are still counting the dead; for there is a victim succumbing to a fatal blow every single day." *(A former* INQUIRER *correspondent based in Cagayan de Oro City, Lina Sagaral Reyes writes for the Women's Features Service.)*

Estrada lawyers . . .

From page A1

Lawyers Jose Flaminiano, Rene Saguisag and Cleofe Versola will continue to represent co-accused Jinggoy Estrada in the plunder case before the Sandiganbayan.

This means they can sit at the defense counsel table, participate in the proceedings and argue with the justices on all matters that may affect their client—the younger Estrada—and, at the same time, the ex-President.

After all, whatever evidence is presented against Estrada can be used against his son because they are accused as co-conspirators in the plunder case.

Jinggoy's lawyers can act independently of (and even take a contrary position to) the designated lawyers from the Public Attorneys Office for his father.

The two accused have different lines of defense on the charges so the strategies they will use to secure acquittal may complement each other but will not necessarily be the same.

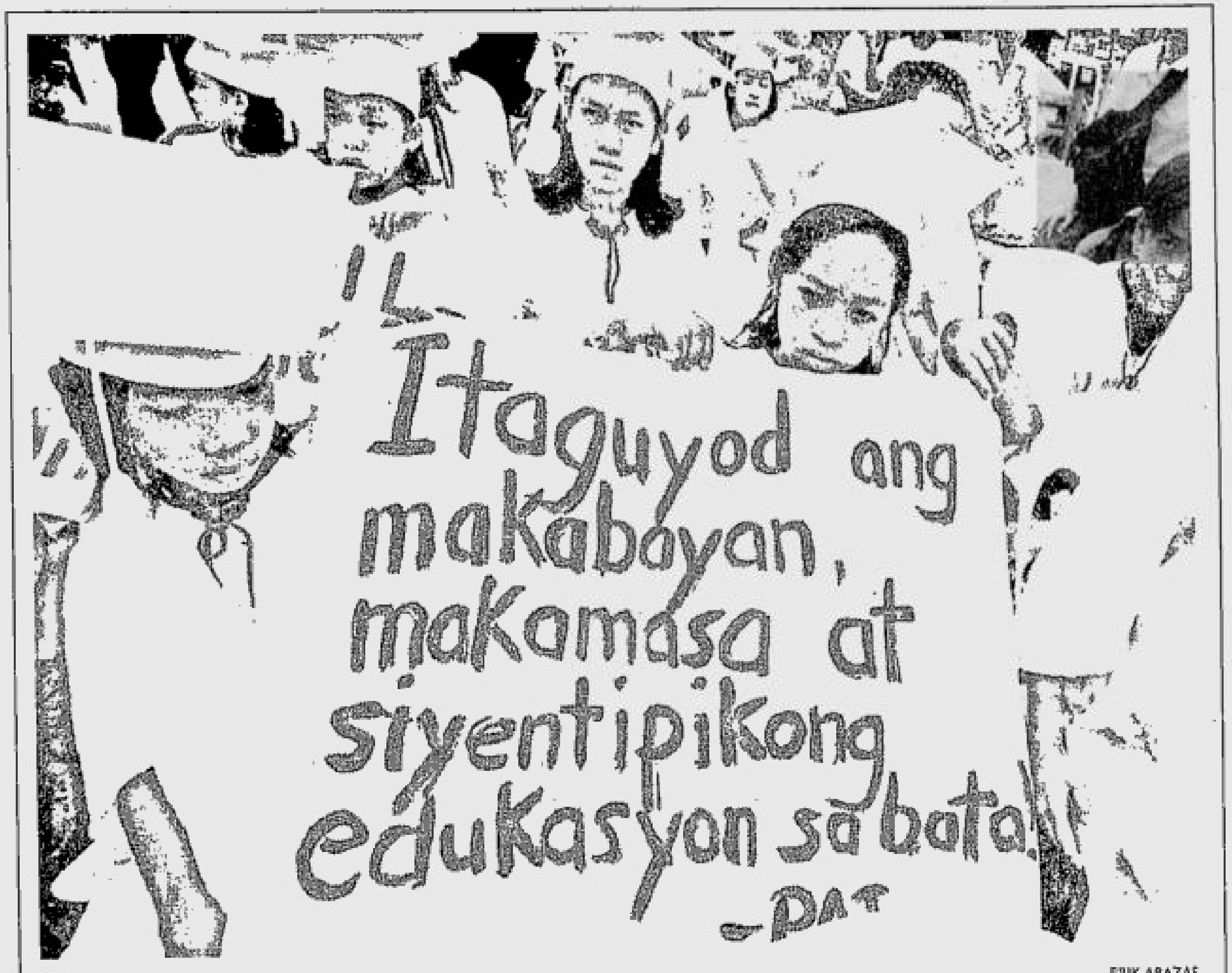
If the prosecution presents evidence that may adversely affect Estrada's defense, his son's lawyers can object to its presentation, even if the PAO lawyers keep quiet about it, on the pretext that their action is aimed at protecting Jinggoy's interests and not those of his father.

They can also keep an eye on the PAO lawyers to make sure they are not doing anything that may jeopardize the interests of their erstwhile client.

They can advise Estrada on the side to take preemptive or corrective measures if they feel his PAO lawyers are selling him out or not doing a good job.

Officially, Estrada will be defended by lawyers not of his own choosing.

Unofficially, however, he will continue to enjoy the services of the lawyers he has publicly disowned.


Itaguyod ang makabayan, makamasa at siyentipikong edukasyon sa bata!
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ERIK ARAZAS

EDUCATION PROMISE

Children in toga costume stage a rally at the Don Chino Bridge (formerly Mendiola) to urge President Macapagal to fulfill her promise of education to the poor instead of stepping up war efforts in Mindanao.

'Exile to ruin democracy'

From page A1

Tiglao did not mention the decision of Estrada, who is detained on charges of plunder, to dismiss all his nine lawyers on the grounds that he could not get justice from the courts.

Estrada then rejected the Sandigan's move to provide him with defense lawyers while his former lawyers said they would not cooperate with the new defense team unless instructed by the former President.

Members of the House loyal to the deposed leader said they would try to convince the Sandiganbayan to allow him to seek medical treatment abroad, which could be a prelude to an exile.

Ignore pressures

Senate President Franklin Drilon urged the Sandiganbayan to ignore external pressures and proceed with the trial of Estrada.

"Stand firm and resolve in your mandate to dispense justice without fear or favor," he said.

"The idea of allowing Estrada to go into exile as a political solution to the continuing threat to our stability is legally untenable," Drilon said in a statement.

"We cannot allow threats and tantrums to impair the impartial and speedy dispensation of justice," he said.

Sen. Joker Arroyo, one of the prosecutors in the aborted impeachment trial of Estrada, said there was no way President Macapagal-Arroyo or even Congress could allow Estrada to go into exile.

"The only entity that can alter Estrada's status of detention is the Sandiganbayan, which now has the sole jurisdiction over the person," Arroyo said.

"There's a maxim in law that once a case is filed in the court, the executive steps out and the judiciary steps in," he said. "In the case of Estrada, the judiciary is now 'in' and the executive is 'out.'"

Arroyo said the argument that Ms Macapagal had entertained the idea of letting Estrada go into exile as a political solution right after People Power II could no longer be invoked.

"When that was being discussed, Estrada had not yet been charged and the cases against him had not yet been filed," Arroyo said.

Even if the President and Congress agree to allow Estrada to go into exile, the Sandiganbayan "cannot be made a party to a political accommodation," he said.

"The President should be careful lest she is baited into a constitutional quagmire," Arroyo underscored.

Seditious

Deputy House Speaker Raul Gonzalez said Estrada's and his lawyers' attacks on the Sandiganbayan and the judicial system could be "seditious" as these were mounted in "open defiance of the rule of law and the constitutional system."

Gonzalez said Estrada's former lawyers could be liable for contempt because they were "tacitly or even directly encouraging their client to defy the court."

He said he pointed these out in a letter to House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II in which he explained why he wanted his signature withdrawn from a House resolution seeking to allow Estrada to go abroad for medical treatment.

"The recent developments brought about by the dramatic dismissal of (Estrada's) lawyers . . . give me the impression that these are orchestrated actions designed to place the court in jeopardy . . . especially among Estrada fanatics whose misplaced emotions and passions are being inflamed by demagogue(s)," Gonzalez said.

He accused Estrada and his lawyers of conspiring to pressure the Macapagal administration to allow him to leave.

"(This is) pure blackmail and merits contempt of court under the circumstances," Gonzalez said in his letter.

Some legislators have warned of another uprising by supporters of Estrada, who is still looked upon as an idol by the poor, if he is not allowed to leave.

No Edsa IV

At the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Ramos downplayed fears that the alleged agitation being done by Estrada's supporters would lead to another Edsa IV.

"There was no Edsa III, so there won't be an Edsa IV," he said. He called Edsa III, the assault on Malacañang on May 1 last year by Estrada's supporters, a "failed uprising" similar to the siege of Manila Hotel in 1986 by Marcos loyalists.

Ramos said that it would be wrong for Estrada to claim that he was not getting justice in the Sandiganbayan since the trial was still ongoing.

"He is getting justice, but whether he will get the justice that he wants will not be known until the end of the trial and a verdict is given," Ramos said.

He claimed that Estrada's hospital arrest and the fact that he was being allowed to talk to the media were already "generous concessions" on the part of the court.

He said Estrada dismissed his lawyers "because of his blunder in admitting that he signed (documents) as Jose Velarde in the presence of bank officials, which is something that he used to deny."

The Velarde account with the Equitable PCIBank at one time contained P3.2 billion in deposits.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said Estrada was muddling the issues raised against him so that he could escape conviction.

"The issues that he needs to explain are the mansions, the P200 million in Muslim Youth Foundation money and the P3.2-billion Jose Velarde account. We might be forgetting that these are the real issues here and not Estrada's refusal to subject himself to the jurisdiction of the Sandiganbayan," Pangilinan said.

Tiglao described Estrada as "master of melodrama" for creating a "perception that there is political tension when there is none."

But "most Filipinos can see through this drama," Tiglao said. He said "there won't be (an Edsa IV) in our generation."

Angara

Opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara said the country could still slide into chaos.

Angara asked Ms Macapagal to "rein in the politics of hate and vindictiveness to calm the already tense political atmosphere and prevent the slide into chaos."

"She should take the cue from what is happening and tell her partisans that enough is enough," he said.

He said "the judiciary should also exercise extreme non-partisanship to allay a general impression that it is part of a conspiracy to deny justice to former President Estrada."

He noted that "those opposed to the Macapagal administration are immediately regarded as destabilizers." ***With a report from Carlito Pablo***

Erap bets it all into reckless political gamble

From page A1

the objective is larger, and more politically unsettling. It seeks to provide a theme around which to mobilize the poor and other Estrada supporters not only to hate the judicial system and the much-maligned business and political "elite" but more so to incite them to violence for another rampage at the seat of state power.

This is a reckless political gamble and Estrada has put all his cards into it to avoid a conviction in the Sandiganbayan.

The foremost question before us is whether Estrada is capable of staging a political mobilization on the scale of May 1, 2001.

A careful examination of the developments from May 1 shows that there is at present no triggering event of the likes of Estrada's arrest that can spark the fury of his followers and send them to assault Malacañang in human waves.

Allegations that the courts have not been fair to him do not constitute a spark for mass mobilization. They are like striking a match head on a wet box.

Records show that the courts have been more abused by Estrada and his lawyers rather than the courts bundling him up into a bullet train to the execution chamber.

If the courts are to be faulted at all, they have erred on the side of leniency. They have been bludgeoned and abused by his lawyers, and one wonders why they have been so intimidated by lawyers who speak like thugs.

Putting pressure

The immediate purpose of all these dramatic spurning of the judicial system is, of course, to put pressure on the Sandiganbayan and the Macapagal administration to allow him to go to the United States for medical treatment of his arthritic knees.

If the courts and the administration buckle down to this pressure in the midst of threats of another mob rising in the streets, there will never be an end to retreat to blandishments from Estrada and his followers.

Reports that Estrada's followers are now trying to mobilize the urban poor for another round of turbulence are nothing new. They have always been trying to mobilize recruits for new adventures, both in the urban poor communities and in the military camps, but the truth is that all these recruitment efforts have failed to win significant support.

This is the reason there was no disturbance in the anniversary of the Jan. 20 toppling of the Estrada regime despite persistent coup rumors.

When the administration made clear that it would be tough on street agitators during the People Power anniversary commemoration, and the military and police showed they meant business, all the threats from trouble makers fizzled out.

The leniency by all previous administrations from Cory Aquino and Fidel Ramos to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to coup makers and political rebellions has only emboldened coup conspirators.

They tried again and again because they would not get even a slap in the wrist even if these attacks on the state constituted treason and those committing treason deserved to be lined up before the wall and summarily executed.

No end

If the government and the Sandiganbayan cave in to threats of a "revolution" if Estrada is not allowed to go to the United States, they can be sure there will never be an end to pressure from the Estrada camp to get him off the hook from his criminal cases.

Those demanding lenient treatment for him and political compromise for a face-saving formula to resolve the cases politically invoke domestic peace.

This kind of peace, at gunpoint, is, however, to be bought at the expense of the integrity of the judicial system. Besides, public opinion has solidified against leniency and against allowing Estrada to go abroad.

There is no evidence that Estrada and his cohorts have the capacity to mobilize a mass constituency for a turbulent political solution of Estrada's criminal cases.

On the contrary, the government is better prepared today than on May 1 to crush any foolish and reckless adventures to destabilize it.

It has consolidated its support from the military and police. Thus, it is best to dismiss these threats coming out of a spent political force as bluff.

Schumacher dominates Grand Prix

SCHUMACHER pumps his fist in delight after winning the Australian F1 GP. REUTERS

MELBOURNE, Australia—Ferrari's Michael Schumacher kicked off his bid for a record-equalling fifth world drivers' championship with a dominant win in a wild season-opening Australian Formula One Grand Prix here Sunday.

Schumacher, somehow avoided a spectacular pile-up at the first corner seconds after the start which wiped out eight drivers, including teammate and pole-sitter Rubens Barrichello and his younger brother Ralf, in a rival Williams.

The 33-year-old German had an early dice for the lead with Juan Pablo Montoya in the other Williams, but once he shook him off with a brilliant passing maneuver his path was cleared for his hattrick of Australian GP wins.

Schumacher beat Montoya of Colombia with McLaren's Kimi Raikkonen of Finland third.

Jaguar's Eddie Irvine was fourth ahead of Australian newcomer Mark Webber in a Minardi with Finland's Mika Salo in a Toyota in the points in sixth.

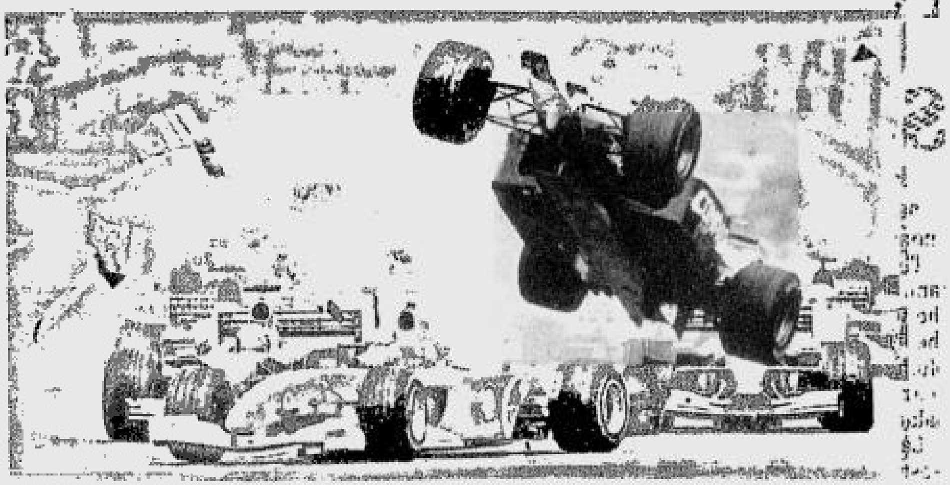
Should Schumacher win this year's world championship he will join F1 legend Juan Manuel Fangio with five drivers' championships.

A massive pile-up on the first bend took eight cars out of the race and affected teams were critical that world governing body FIA did not order a restart rather than continue the race behind a safety car while the wreckage was cleared.

It was Schumacher's 54th GP victory in his 162nd race and gave champion constructor Ferrari an early jump on their rivals heading into the next GP in Malaysia on March 17.

In a heart-racing opening few moments, Ralf Schumacher was sent hurtling out of the race along with seven other drivers in a wild mix-up heading into the first bend.

Schumacher ran up the back of fastest qualifier Barrichello's Ferrari and was airborne temporarily until he was slowed by the gravel trap and came to rest next to a wall. Barrichello appeared to unexpectedly brake causing Schumacher to come over the top of him. *AFP*



THE CAR of Williams driver Ralf Schumacher flies through the air seconds after the start of the Australian F1 Grand Prix. REUTERS

Jeremy eyes 2nd straight karting win

EDGESPORTS protégé Jeremy Marquez dreams of joining the elite class of expert drivers competing in the Formula-A class next year. And to do that, he must first win the overall crown at the Intercontinental-A class this year.

The 22-year-old son of Parañaque mayor Joey Marquez will be gunning for his second straight victory as the 2002 Shell Karting Super Series stages its second leg on March 10 at the Carmona Circuit Philippines.

Marquez, last year's Rookie Karter of the Year, pulled a lopsided win against Edgesports teammates Ryan Francisco and Mandy Borja in the kickoff of this nine-leg series sponsored by Pilipinas Shell, Casino Filipino, Smart ZED, Nokia and Coca-Cola Bottlers.

But in the coming race, he could face tough challenge from young karters Tyson Sy, 15-year-old Dado Pena and 13-year-old Michelle Bumgarner.

"Hopefully, I could join the expert ranks next year. But to win the Intercon-A title this year would be tough, considering the challenge of other karters including my Edgesports teammates and the young kids who seemed to be improving every race," said Marquez.

Kart 1 ace driver Philip Alvendia hopes to make it double over Marcel Thenu and JP Carino in the Formula Rotax 125 while Mateo Guidecelli and Robert Balton also gun for their second win in the Zed Cadet 85 and Zed Cadet 60 divisions respectively.

Newcomer tops 'Superdrags'

NEWCOMER RIC Wee, of Autoplus Sportzentrum, stunned 87 drag racers to rule the recent "Battle by the Bay Superdrags" of the Philippine Drag Racing Familysport (PDRF).

Wee, of Autoplus Sportszentrum, clocked a record 12.163 seconds for the "Fastest All-Motor Honda" title. His top speed mark was 111.93 miles per hour.

Driving the Autoplus Silver Bullet Civic KG, Wee shattered last year's record run of 12.565 seconds by Marvin Montecillo. To convince doubting Thomases, he made two backup runs at 12.216 and 12.245 seconds at 111.38 mph.

Meanwhile, Dondi Montecillo bagged the PDRF Quick VIII Heads-up class with an 11.985 run

The next PDRF drag races will be held on March 9 (X-Drags Power Fest) and March 23 (Battle by the Bay), also at the Manila Harbour Centre.

Letran makes 'NC' history

By Dennis U. Eroa

COLEGIO de San Juan de Letran stamped its mark in NCAA sporting history, winning for the fourth straight year the senior and junior overall championships with solid victories in various fronts.

After winning the centerpiece men's and junior basketball events, the Muralla-based athletes did not disappoint as they left their rivals fighting for second place in the 77th edition of the country's oldest collegiate sporting league.

After a slow start in the first half, the Knights rampaged in the final half of the competitions, gallopping their ways to the tae-kwon-do, lawn tennis and the men's and table tennis titles for a total of 198 points, 18 points ahead of second placer San Sebastian College.

Mapua's 139.5 points is good for third spot in the thrilling race for overall honors. The Cardinals triumphed in track and field and men's volleyball.

Not to be outdone, the Squires powered their way to the championships in chess, table tennis, lawn tennis, football and track and field for a lopsided total of 213 points, against the 148.5 points of second placer San Beda College.

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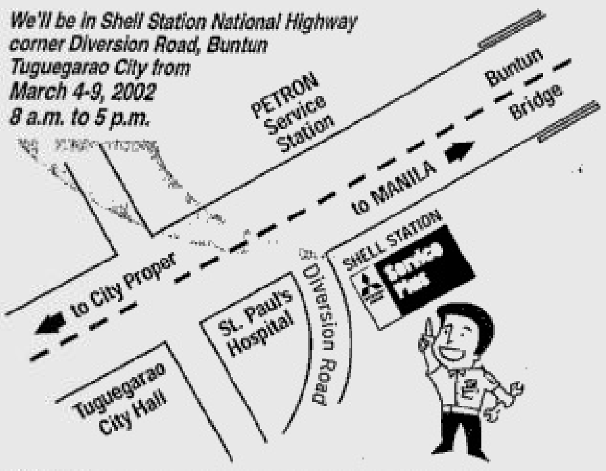

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Els builds 8-shot lead over Woods, Aussie bet

ELS acknowledges the cheers of the crowd. AP

MIAMI, Florida—Ernie Els shot his second six-under-par 66 of the week to open up a commanding eight-stroke lead over Tiger Woods and Australian Peter Lonard at the $4.7 million Genuity Championship on Saturday.

New Zealander Craig Perks, Vijay Singh of Fiji and American pair Justin Leonard and Rich Beem were 10 strokes behind South African Els, whose 66 was three shots better than anyone else in the third round at the Doral Golf Resort and Spa.

"I had a good day," said Els, 32, after finishing with a 17-under-par total of 199. "I saw the wind was up off a little different direction, but pretty much similar to yesterday and after yesterday's round (of 67), I didn't feel all that scared going off."

Els, who did not drop a stroke over the first two days, began the third round by going birdie-birdie. However, he proceeded to card two bogeys, the first of which was potentially damaging.

"On four I came off a four-iron, and I cut it into the water there," he said. "I made a good putt for bogey, and I think that kind of settled things a little bit.

"After that I played two more really good holes. So I felt I didn't lose any ground after a good solid start," said Els, who has 19 birdies through 54 holes and only two bogeys.

Els has held or shared the lead after 54 holes 10 times and on six of those occasions he won, including the 1994 US Open at Oakmont.

His eight-stroke lead is the biggest on the USPGA Tour this year and the most since Woods led the 2000 WGC-NEC Invitational by nine shots.

"I have got to try and be aggressive, but careful at the same time," Els said of Sunday's round. "You've got to go out there and play your game the way you have been, and just make absolutely sure you don't make any big mistakes."

Woods started the day four shots behind Els, but is now eight back—a position he is familiar with.

In the final round of the 1998 Johnnie Walker Classic, Woods was eight behind Els, but caught him and won in a playoff.

"I played well all day," said Woods after his 70. "I hit a lot of good shots today, hit some good putts today that didn't go in, and also played some beautiful par saves as well."

The world number one will be paired with Perks on Sunday, but he will have Els on his mind one group behind.

Woods has the third-lowest fourth-round scoring average on the tour this year (66.33), but even with that he will need some help from Els to win. *AP*

Scotland golfer sparkles

KUALA LUMPUR—Scotland's Alastair Forsyth sank a six-meter (20-foot) putt Sunday to defeat Stephen Leaney of Australia in the second playoff hole and win the Malaysian Open golf tournament.

Both players ended the final round tied at a 17-under-par 267 over the 6,311-meter (6,935-yard), par-71 Royal Selangor Golf Club course. Alex Cejka of Germany finished third with a 16-under-par total of 268.

Webb tames Norwegian

MELBOURNE—Former world number one Karrie Webb won the women's Australian Open in a playoff against Norway's Suzann Pettersen on Sunday after they had been tied on 10-under par 278.

Australia's Michelle Ellis and Briton Becky Morgan were eight shots back in equal third place. Defending champion, Swede Sophie Gustafson, was fifth a further stroke behind on one-under par 287.

Eagle Ridge offers Lynx

A FORD Lynx will be raffled off as the grand prize in the second Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club Invitational, the member-guest tournament of the country's biggest golf complex, slated April 19-21.

The challenging Faldo and Dye courses, two of the three existing at Eagle with the fourth designed by Greg Norman set to open this year, will be used for the 36-hole tourney spread out in three days.

Entry fee is P6,000 per team inclusive of giveaways, free practice round, raffle and more. For inquiries please call 046-4192841 (look for Gwyne) or fax to 046-4192843.

Eagle's huge membership roster is expected to show up in full force in the event kicking off a big summer lineup at Eagle which will see the opening of its sprawling main clubhouse and the first nine holes of the Norman course.

Meanwhile, the members monthly tournament for march will be held on March 16 at the Aoki course with Mizuno/Master Sports as sponsors.

Mizuno, through its chief operating officer Lovell Gopez and sales and marketing chief Daboy del Carmen, will be providing an attractive package of prizes for both the tournament and raffle.

Mizuno will also put on display its latest line of drivers, irons and other equipment to be offered with special discounts.

Romeo Odi and Ramir Encabo, low net and low gross winners of the February tournament, will be back to seek repeat victories.

Dancesport goes to Fontana

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

SINCE 1996 when it was founded, the Dance Sport Council of the Philippines has faced many stormy weathers, including the perennial lack of funding. But banking on sheer guts and perseverance, it is still around to make its presence felt in the world of dancing.

Only recently, national Latin champions Bong Marquez and Belinda Adora won the gold medals at the Japan Open Championships in Nagoya, beating a world-class field of 69 couples even though in terms of international exposure they paled in comparison to their rivals who have had too much experience, skill and talent.

"Our dance athletes are making good because we are leaving nothing to chance by hiring foreign coaches," said petite Becky Garcia, president of the DSCP since 1996. "We are now moving toward professionalizing the ballroom dancing industry by hiring foreign coaches to train potential and gifted dances like Bong and Belinda for international competitions. We need these foreign coaches here. It will entail a lot of money to bring them here, but we need their presence in the country."

One of these foreign coaches is the famous German dance coach and adjudicator Wolfgang Opitz, who polished the skills of Bong and Belinda in their numerous stints abroad. He will be one of foreign coaches and adjudicators during the first DSCP national quarterly ranking and competition at the world-class Fontana Convention Center inside Clark Field in Pampanga on March 7-9.

The national ranking and competition is the council's first major activity this year, featuring, among others, a special dance demo by professional Latin champions Marcus Hemm and Charlotte Egstrand. It will eliminate with the competition proper starting at 10 a.m. this Saturday, showcasing the modern techniques and syllabi of dance athletes from Metro Manila, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, with Dr. Emmanuel Angeles, president and CEO of Clark Development Corp., and officials of host Fontana Country Club gracing the blue-ribbon affair.

This out-of-town sortie in Angeles City is aimed at bringing and promoting dancesport to the grassroots following similar successful workshops and competitions in the past held in the cities of Bacolod, Cebu, Davao, General Santos, Dagupan and Cotabato.

"At present, we are also focused on training the youth because by 2008 these kids will be the ones representing the Philippines in major international championships, including—hopefully—the Olympics," said Garcia. On their limited resources, Garcia stressed she was hoping that affluent members of society who are ballroom dancing enthusiasts will support dancesport just like what the project directors of the 1970s did to Philippine sports. Dancesport was held as a demonstration event in the Asian Games in Bangkok in 1998, only two years after DSCP was founded. The Philippines did not make waves in that Asiad mainly because dancesport was just growing up in this country compared to the others which have been in the sport for ages.

* * *

SPORTS TRIVIA. American John L. Sullivan was the last bare-knuckle world heavyweight boxing champion. In the 1880s, he toured the United States, fighting all comers. Although he used gloves in these exhibition matches, he fought bare-fisted in title bouts until 1889. In 1892, Sullivan lost to compatriot James "Gentleman Jim" Corbett in the first ever championship fight using gloves. During the 1890s, Corbett revolutionized the sport by introducing a style of boxing in which the fighter did not rely on brute strength alone, but on fast footwork, a variety of punches and feints.

Despite its popular following, boxing was outlawed during most of the 19th century. In 1896, New York legalized the sport, leading other American states to follow. In 1920, the National Boxing Association was formed, the same year the landmark Madison Square Garden in New York City was built by promoter George "Tax" Bikard.

Sorenstam beats Kane

SORENSTAM hoists the Takefuji Classic trophy. AP

WAIKOLOA, Hawaii—Sweden's Annika Sorenstam birdied the first hole of a sudden-death playoff to defeat defending champion Lorie Kane of Canada and win the season-opening Takefuji LPGA Classic.

Sorenstam fired her second straight four-under-par 66 at the Waikoloa Beach Resort and completed 54 holes tied with Kane at 14-under 196.

But Kane missed her birdie attempt at the first playoff hole, the par-five 18th, and Sorenstam converted for her 32nd career victory and 14th in the last 25 months.

The 31-year-old Swedish superstar won eight times last year and set or tied 30 LPGA records en route to her fourth player of the year award.

She became the first woman to eclipse the $2-million mark in earnings and got a leg up on breaking that record by pocketing the $135,000 first prize. *AFP*

Triathlon series begins March 10

THE GRASSROOT development program of the Triathlon Association of the Philippines takes centerstage this month with the launching of the 2002 National Age-Group Triathlon series and the Fit and Tri National Youth series.

Kicking off the Mindanao NAGT is the Enervon Araw ng Dabaw leg of the 2002 series on March 10 in Davao City to be organized by Davao sportsman Vic Sai.

Lito Fugoso's First Wave Productions will start the youth triathlon program in Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City on March 17 with the support of the Ayala Alabang Village Association and DLSU-Zobel.

The NAGT series is exclusive for non-members of the RP triathlon team's national and training pools, while the Fit and Tri series caters to triathletes aged 7 to 18 years old.

For inquiries on the events, please call 082-2279347 (Vic Sai), 0919-2593464 (First Wave Productions), and 0916-842-1114 (TRAP). Visit First Wave at http://www.imbue.ph/fit&tri and Ridge Triathlon at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ridgetri.

Agravante, Demaluna top kitefest 3rd leg

TACLOBAN, City—The third leg of the Bear Brand Kitefest 2002 was held at the Leyte Sports Complex with Angelito Agravante and Warlito Demaluna emerging as the overall winners in their respective categories last Feb. 24.

Agravante's entry, "Flying Fish," won first place in the figure kite category over Diego Osmeña and Neil Estrada in the adults division. Osmeña's entry was "Tacloban Eagle," while Estrada's bet was "Birds in Paradise."

Agravante was also adjudged as the winner in the super kite category or the entry with the biggest flying kite in the figure kite.

Demaluna topped the adults geometric kite category with his entry "Sandatang Pilipinas." He won over Isabelo Jude Bugayo's "Rainbow Flying House" and Salvador Partoles "Bear Brand Box."

Entries submission today

OFFICIAL entries to Mandaluyong Coliseum's bigtime 5-cock derby must be submitted today, Monday, March 4 from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The event is set for tomorrow, Tuesday (March 5).

Veteran derbyist Jimmy Mariquit of Angeles City, one of Pampanga's highly-rated cockers, will host this one-day cockfest. Sponsors are Sagupaan Super Feeds and Washout Shampoo.

At least 30 participants are seeing action in this event, Mariquit assured.

On Thursday, March 7, is another 5-cocker with the team of Lito Orillaza, lawyer Rudy Salud and SM Eruel as hosts.

Meanwhile, two entries-Pitmaster of Rey Lee and Vic Yu and Jopete RAY Showdown of Danny Ty and Romero Yu-emerged as co-champions 95.5 points) in the LGBA 1st Conference 6-Cock Derby last week.

For other inquiries, please contact 531-4005, 531-4003, 531-2341 and 534-4110.

Danceworx scholarship up

DANCEWORX at GameworX Inc., the newest dance school in the Philippines, is now accepting applicants for scholarship program set to begin on March 15 at the 4th level of Festival Supermall, Filinvest Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

This program is in cooperation with the Philippine Professional Dance Sports Association (PPDSA) represented by its president, Gifford Javieres, and GameworX Inc.

Applicants should be between 18 to 25 years of age, male or female.

GameworX President Jesus "Jun" Avecilla said interested parties may call 850-35-51 or 433-50-18 or may come directly at GameworX information center. Deadline is on March 15.

SUPREME COURT NETFEST
Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide Jr. (fourth from left) awarded trophies and medals to the winners of the recently concluded Supreme Court Centennial Tennis Tournament. Leading the winners are men's doubles champions Justice Presby Velasco Jr., court administrator (fifth from left) and Judge Vic Cabanos, RTC Nueva Ecija (extreme left). Also shown (from left) are first runnerup Justice Godardo Jacinto, Court of Appeals and Jerry Catalan, Court of appeals, second runner-up: Felizardo Caasi, Jr., Court of Appeals and Amado del Rosario, Court of Appeals. Leo Elizarde (third from left) is Supreme Court tennis coordinator.

75 fights on tap in 'Galleros' tilt

NO less than 75 exciting fights await cocking aficionados with the holding of the 4th leg of the Galleros de Manila 5-Cock Derby today at the Roligon Mega Cockpit in Parañaque.

This derby hosted by Voltaire Fronda and Col. Arthur Senosa is sponsored by Ninja Superfeeds.

Saipan-based Jhun Marasigan of the JM Intruder entry showed the way in the 3rd leg of this circuit held last Feb. 13 with a perfect 5 points.

With four derbies remaining, Bobby del Rosario of Mangzee Gamefarm leads in the cocker of the year standings with 10 points. He is closely followed by Iking Araneta and Jhun Marasigan with 9 points apiece. In solo third spot with 8.5 points is the entry of Emmette San Juan.

Breathing in their necks is the entry Jopete Rey/Showdown.

Promoter Danny "Showdown" Ty announced that the P300 gate prize is buy-one, take-one until 6 p.m. only after which it is a sit-anywhere basis.

For inquiries and cockhouse reservation call Tiling or Lito at 833-16-38 or 833-22-75.

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Capriati close to regaining No. 1 ranking

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona—Jennifer Capriati is on target to go back to the top of the world rankings after overcoming Nathalie Dechy of France 6-2 6-3 on Saturday to reach the final of the $585,000 Scottsdale Classic.

Capriati lost the No. 1 spot to Venus Williams last Monday, but will try to displace her fellow American in next-week's rankings by beating younger sister Serena to the desert title and the $93,000 winner's check on Sunday.

Earlier on Saturday, third seed Serena defeated second-seeded Swiss Martina Hingis 6-1 3-6 6-4.

"It's definitely an incentive," said Capriati, who ruled at the top of the rankings for seven consecutive weeks before Venus took over.

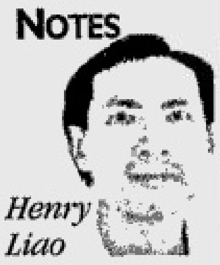
"It's not Venus but I'm playing the closest thing. If I win, it'll be regaining the No. 1 spot. Of course it's something to go for. Definitely I want to win, and play well."

Capriati, however, knows it will not be an easy task taking out the younger Williams, even though she leads 4-2 in their career head-to-head series.

"I'm looking forward to it," said top seed Capriati. "Every time we play it's going to be a tough match. It's going to be a battle." *Reuters*

Chinese dribblers

NBA NOTES



Henry Liao

AND THEN there are two.

The first two players from China in NBA history are currently suiting up in the league and it won't be long before a third comes along.

Mengke Bateer, he of the gladiator-like look, was signed by the lowly Denver Nuggets on Feb. 26 for the remainder of this season, joining 7-1 Wang Zhizhi, a second-year forward-center for the Dallas Mavericks whose historic NBA sojourn began in April 2001.

The 6-11 Bateer, who hails from Inner Mongolia, is the oldest and least skilled of China's "Walking Great Wall" Twin Towers (the others being Wang and 7-5 Yao Ming) in the 2000 Sydney Olympics, contributing only 4.7 points and 3.0 rebounds in six games (2-4) in his country's 10th-place finish in the 12-nation tourney, but he is the most physical.

Wang, who turns 25 on July 8, is averaging 5.2 points (on .392 FG and .789 FT shooting) and 1.8 boards in 10.8 reserves minutes per game with the Mavs this season. Despite his limited playing time, he owns the fifth most number of three-pointers made on the team with 26. Wang posted a career-high 15 points in Dallas' 112-100 success at New Jersey last Feb. 6.

Yao, who turns only 22 in September, is seeing action with the Shanghai Sharks in the Chinese National Basketball League. Of the three giants, he is perhaps the most athletic and versatile, doing it all on both ends of the floor. Yao was not allowed by the China Basketball Association to apply for the NBA draft last June due to his tender age and importance to the local pro league (with the departure of Wang). He could be available for the NBA draft this summer.

A battering ram, the 26-year-old Bateer was taken by the Nuggets following the Feb. 21 deadline trade that saw center Raef LaFrentz move to the Dallas Mavericks.

Bateer, a bull-strong 290-pounder, played in the 1996 (Atlanta) and 2000 Olympics and helped guide the Chinese national team to the silver medal in the 2001 World University Games.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

MOTOR SPORTS: Race Day - Australian Grand Prix at 8 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

2002 F1 Australian Grand Prix at 8:45 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

Chequered Flag - Australian Grand Prix at 11 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

TENNIS: ATP Siebel Open, Semifinal at 8 p.m. on Star Sports

GOLF: PGA Genuity Championship, Final Round at 2 p.m. (r – 11 p.m.) on Star Sports

BASKETBALL: US NCAA - Massachusetts vs Xavier at 8 a.m. (r), De Paul vs Marquette at 10 a.m., Texas vs Iowa State at 1 p.m. on ESPN

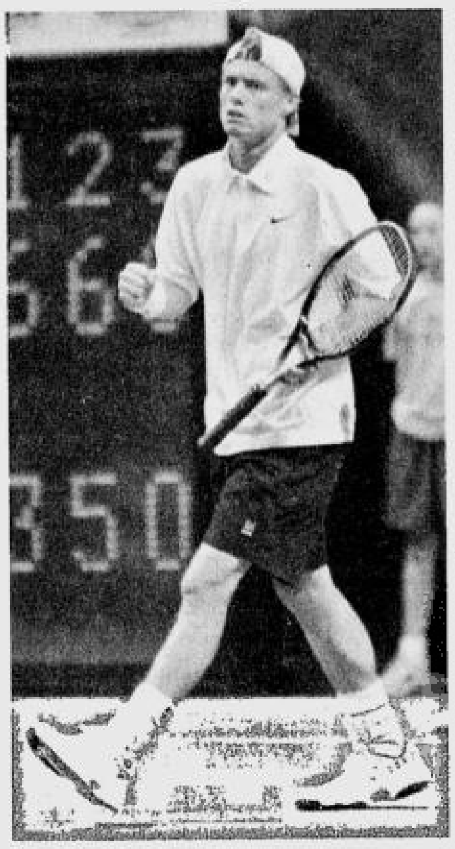
This Week in the NBA at 12:30 p.m. on CNN

POOL: Mosconi Cup 2001 at 3 p.m. (r) on ESPN

Rack 'Em Up - Earl Strickland vs Mika Immonen at 7 p.m. on ESPN

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

It's Agassi vs Hewitt for Siebel title



HEWITT: Pretty much in control. AP

SAN JOSE, California—Andre Agassi showed young Andy Roddick that sheer power is no match for savvy experience.

"You're the professor," a fan shouted as Agassi beat Roddick 6-3, 6-1 in just 49 minutes Saturday night to advance to the Siebel Open final.

Agassi, the second seed, will face top-ranked Lleyton Hewitt, the top seed, in the final on Sunday.

Playing in his first tournament of the year after withdrawing from the Australian Open with the wrist injury, Agassi was skilled and assured as he picked apart his hard-serving 19-year-old opponent.

He cleanly aced every single point of the third game—a first for Agassi—to take a 3-0 lead.

Agassi, who has won the San Jose title four times, made just four unforced errors and won 24 of 25 first serve points.

Agassi, who improved to 3-0 against Roddick, shook his head in amazement over the four clean aces in one game. He has never hit four straight aces in 908 career matches.

In the earlier match Saturday, top-ranked Hewitt advanced with a 7-5, 6-4 victory over Jan-Michael Gambill.

Improving quickly in his first tournament since a first-round loss at the Australian Open, Hewitt won despite an inconsistent serve. The world No. 1 played his usual conservative, precise game, allowing Gambill to make 26 unforced errors, mostly at the close of long points.

"I felt pretty much in control of the match all the way," Hewitt said. "I didn't really take my foot off the pedal. I knew there would be a time when he couldn't keep coming up with those big first serves." **AP**

Hapee gets high scorer

TITLE-HUNGRY Hapee Toothpaste netted a big fish with its acquisition of the high-scoring Peter June Simon.

Simon was picked as the MBA's Discovery of the Year while playing for the Davao Eagles last year.

"Peter is going to boost out lineup," said Hapee team manager Bernard Yang. Hapee also acquired former UAAP defensive ace Francis Jones.

Simon and Jones will suit up for the Sparklers in the coming PBL President's Cup slated on April 3.

Dennis U. Eroa

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▩ Schumacher wins pileup-marred GP /A21
▩ Agassi, Hewitt collide in Final /A23

SPORTS
Editor Al S. Mendoza ● Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

Coca-Cola stops Purefoods

TEAMS	W	L
Purefoods	3	1
Red Bul	3	1
Alaska	3	1
Hapee-RP	3	1
Coca-Cola	3	2
Talk N Text	2	1
Fedex	2	2
Sta. Lucia	1	2
Selecta-RP	1	3
Shell	1	3
Ginebra	1	3
San Miguel	0	3

GAME TOMORROW:
(Philsports)
6 p.m.—SMB vs Fedex

By June Navarro

COCA-COLA sent front-running Purefoods crashing back to earth with an emphatic 89-69 victory last night in the PBA Samsung Governors Cup at the Philsports Arena.

Ron Hale, the Tigers' replacement for the ineffective Fred Williams, debuted with aplomb as he led all scorers with 40 points on top of 11 rebounds, five assists and four blocks.

Hale went 8-out-of-8 from the field and canned five of his 10 attempts from beyond the arc that highlighted his impressive performance.

Hale also put to shame the battle-tested import duo of Lenard White and Derrick Brown as the Tigers broke away early in the third period en route to their third win in six games.

In dealing Purefoods its first setback after stringing three victories, the Tigers also put behind a tragic loss the Hapee-RP Team handed them last week.

The Nationals humiliated the Tigers after springing back from a 28-point deficit in the third quarter to register an 8 amazing 87-77 victory.

"We decided to forget everything that happened during that game. In fact for the first time, we didn't watch the video. It was a freak loss," said Coke coach Chot Reyes.

Hale, a teammate of former Red Bull import Tony Lang in a league in Japan, made the Tigers forget that stinging loss as he took the lead in overhauling a 41-37 halftime deficit.

Davonn Harp buried a triple in the final 1.5 seconds to lift Hapee-RP Team past Selecta-RP, 65-64, in the second game.

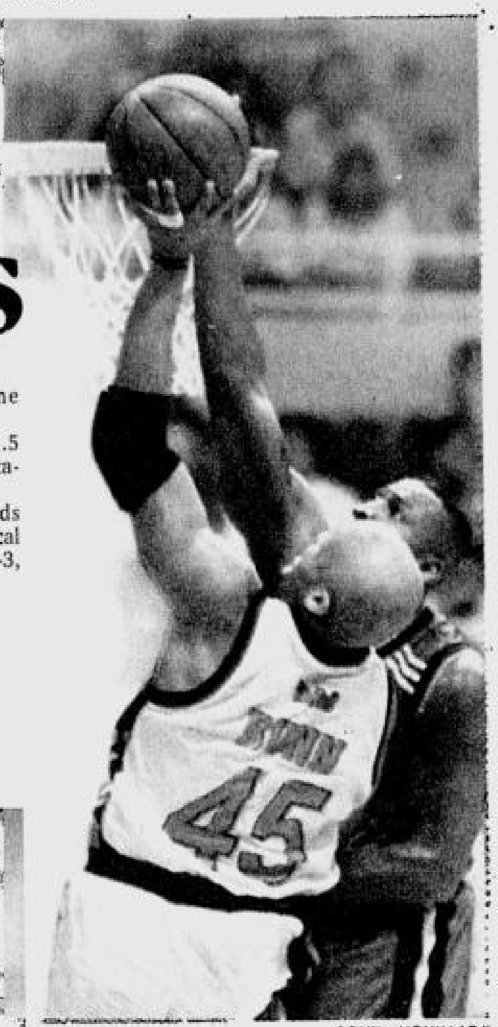
Hapee-RP Team joined Alaska, Purefoods and Red Bull atop the standings with identical 3-1 records while Selecta-RP dropped to 1-3, tying Shell and Ginebra.

Scores:

COKE 89—Hale 40, Ellis 18, Avenido 10, Antonio 7, Abuda 5, Ballesteros 4, Manalo 3, Morano 2, Gamboa 0.

PUREFOODS 69—Brown 24, White 23, Evangelista 6, Patrimonio 6, Yee 4, Yap 3, Raymundo 3, Magsanoc 0, Cantonjos 0.

Quarters: 16-20, 36-41, 65-53, 89-69.



ROMY HOMILLADA

MONTRELL Dobbins of Alaska Milk (right) blocks a shot by Joe Bunn of Red Bull during their PBA game Saturday night at the Cuneta Astrodome. Alaska prevailed, 81-58.

Portland makes it 9 straight

MILWAUKEE—Damon Stoudamire hit a 3-pointer with two-tenths of a second left in overtime as the Portland Trail Blazers extended their winning streak to a season-high nine games with an improbable 104-103 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks on Saturday night.

Stoudamire, who had 24 points, gave the Blazers their first lead at 99-98 when he made a 3 with 1:13 remaining in overtime.

Sam Cassell, who finished with 20 points, converted a four-point play that gave Milwaukee a 103-101 lead with 3.4 seconds to go, setting up Stoudamire's game-winner.

It was Portland's sixth straight road win and 22nd in 28 games overall.

Scottie Pippen's apparent 3-pointer gave the Blazers a brief one-point lead with 6.3 seconds left in regulation. But replays showed Pippen's right foot was on the 3-point line, and the referees changed it to a 2-point shot.

Heat 109, Mavericks 95

In Dallas, Alonzo Mourning scored 10 of his 23 points during a decisive 24-5 run to start the third quarter, and Miami cruised to an easy victory over the Mavericks.

Miami, which began the night first in the NBA in defense and last in offense, got 26 points from Eddie Jones and a season-high 19 points from reserve Chris Gatling to surpass 100 points for only the seventh time this season.

The Heat won for the fourth time in five games to continue their climb into the Eastern Conference playoff race after a 5-23 start.

Dallas, which had won six of seven, was paced by Michael Finley's 25 points. Dirk Nowitzki added 21.

Timberwolves 116, Jazz 105

In Salt Lake City, Kevin Garnett had 26 points and 11 rebounds, and Gary Trent added 17 points as Minnesota's reserves produced 56 points to lead the Timberwolves.

Karl Malone scored 25 points, and Bryon Russell tied a career high with 25 for the Jazz. John Stockton, who turns 40 later this month, had 21 points and nine assists.

Utah dropped to 1-12 against the top five teams in the West, winless in three games against Minnesota. The Jazz had won seven of their previous eight overall.

Hawks 84, Cavaliers 81

In Atlanta, Toni Kukoc scored 23 points, and Atlanta bounced back from a dismal first quarter to beat Cleveland.

Kukoc scored 10 points in the fourth quarter to bail out the Hawks on a night when their top two scorers combined for just 17 points.

Shareef Abdur-Rahim was held to 14, and Jason Terry managed only three on 1-of-14 shooting. **AP**

Complete results: Atlanta 84, Cleveland 81; Miami 109, Dallas 95; Portland 104, Milwaukee, 103 (OT); Houston 104, Phoenix 97; Minnesota 116, Utah 105; LA Clippers 109, Golden State 95.

Gerry wins

WORLD Boxing Council International superflyweight Gerry Peñalosa remained on course for another shot at the world title as he beat Joel Avila via a technical decision in a boring bout Saturday night at the Makati Coliseum.

Avila's right eyebrow was bloodied following an accidental headbutt and referee Bruce McTavish stopped the fight right after the end of the eighth round.

Peñalosa, who is eyeing a crack at the WBC title being held by Masamori Tokuyama, was leading in all the judges' scorecards when the fight was stopped.

Vincent Rodriguez and Alex Villacampa saw Peñalosa the clear winner, 79-72, while Ferdinand Estrella scored it, 79-71, also in Gerry's favor.

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- Reject garbage deal, green groups urge /A26
- Bare Eye: Ang Pagbabalik ni Elias Plaridel, a farewell to fairy tales /A26

METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

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No pro-Erap mobilization, say Metro Manila mayors

PNP monitoring loyalist groups

By Christian V. Esguerra and Martin P. Marfil

THERE will be no mobilization of forces loyal to ousted President Joseph Estrada and no Edsa IV, according to Metro Manila mayors.

"I don't think they (Estrada loyalists) can still mobilize," said Benjamin Abalos Sr., chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority.

But the Philippine National Police has mobilized its intelligence community to monitor the activities of pro-Estrada groups even as PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Cresencio Maralit assured the public that security preparations were in place.

"We would like to assure the public that the PNP is on top of the situation and we are monitoring closely...any action or any protest move that would threaten to destabilize the existing...stable peace and order situation," Maralit said.

He said the PNP's mobilization came after people's Movement Against Poverty leader Ronald Lumban said his group would bring the case of Estrada to the streets after his lawyers withdrew from the Sandiganbayan cases.

Earlier, Estrada said in interviews that he doubted if he would receive justice from the courts.

Describing another Edsa people power as an impossible dream, Caloocan Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo, a staunch ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo, said "people are now satisfied."

"Even if some are not contented (with the government), they would not resort to mass mobilization," Malonzo said.

Even former Caloocan Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio and his older brother Boy, both members of Estrada's inner circle, have been silent on the issue, Malonzo said.

The brothers were said to have provided warm bodies during the series of pro-Estrada protest actions that culminated into the

NO PRO-ERAP/ A26

Bureau of Corrections director should be relieved, says VACC

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE BUREAU of Corrections director should be temporarily relieved of his post to prevent him from influencing an inquiry into alleged irregularities in the New Bilibid Prisons, according to the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption.

The VACC is referring to retired Col. Ricardo Macala, whom another prison official has also accused of falsifying his birth year.

"We don't want to have a cover-up here," VACC Chair Dante Jimenez told the INQUIRER.

Jimenez said that if Macala is found guilty of coddling high-profile inmates and receiving money for giving them special treatment, the prison chief should be ousted and appropriate charges should be filed against him.

Reports have alleged that prison officials were also conniving with rich inmates supposedly to put up videoke bars at the NBP's maximum security compound. These bars reportedly even have guest relations officers (GROs).

Jimenez said that even before these allegations were reported, the VACC had been receiving reports that illegal drugs were being smuggled into the NBP two to three times daily.

"There are a lot of (illegal drug) consumers there," he said.

Jimenez said the allegations were "serious and disturbing" and should merit an immediate investigation by the Department of Justice.

Another prison official, Supt. Rachel Ruelo, had also accused Macala of faking his birth year, changing it from 1935 to 1939, to secure an appointment as administrator of Lucena City, before he became prison chief.

Ruelo filed the falsification complaint against Macala before the Office of the Ombudsman.

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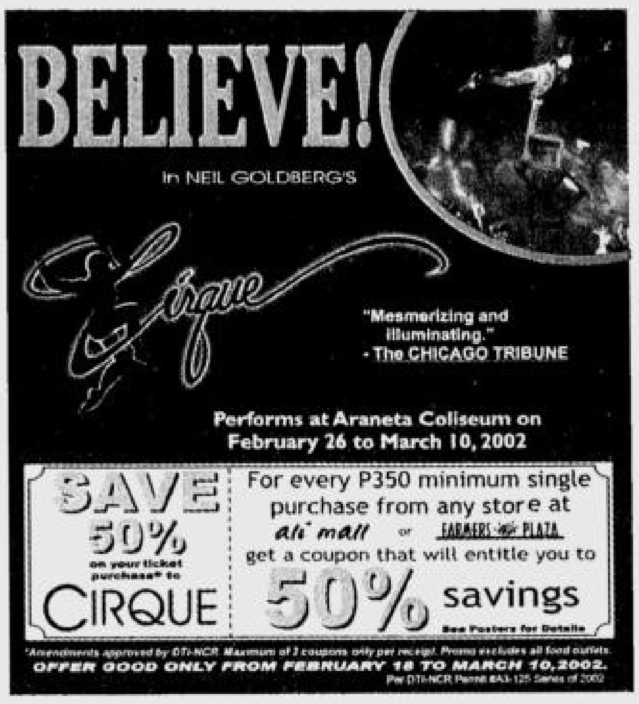
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Reject garbage deal, green groups urge

By Alcuin Papa

ENVIRONMENTAL groups have joined civil society and non-government organizations in urging President Macapagal-Arroyo not to sign the Jancom garbage contract saying it would violate the ban on the use of incinerators.

In an open letter sent to the President last week, around 20 groups led by Greenpeace and the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (Gaia) appealed to Ms Macapagal to reject the Jancom contract.

"You are our last line of defense against the ruthless onslaught of powerful incinerator interests on the environment, health, economic and social welfare of our people," the groups told the President. "We earnestly exhort you not to sign the contract with Jancom."

The groups identified Jancom as the source of the incinerator lobby and interests in the country.

They said that with Jancom's "very powerful connections" in the House of Representatives, the garbage contractor in 1998 managed to derail the passage of the Clean Air Act in Congress under then Speaker Jose de Venecia.

Congress did revive the proposal the next year. After 5 million signatures were collected in support of the Clean Air Act, it was passed into law, with the incineration ban intact, during the time of Speaker Manuel Villar.

Anti-corruption groups and NGOs headed by the Citizens' National Network against Poverty and Corruption earlier wrote the President expressing fear that government stood to lose P390 billion if it implemented its contract with Jancom.

They called the contract "defective and grossly disadvantageous to the government and the Filipino people," adding it would defraud the government of P390 billion and violate the Clean Air Act.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority also filed a petition before the Supreme Court asking it to rule on the matter en banc and to clarify whether or not the contract is enforceable.

Last January, the Supreme Court's Third Division ruled that the contract was "valid and perfected." But the High Court did qualify that the contract cannot be enforced without the signature of the President.

The groups also cited Rep. Nereus Acosta, who was quoted as saying that the definition of incineration as a process which emits pollution is very clear.

"There is no such thing as 'nonpollutive incinerators,'" the groups said.

They stressed that the contract would kill the Clean Air Act as well as the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, which is the first bill President Macapagal-Arroyo signed into law.

Other open-letter signatories include the Recycling Movement of the Philippines, Mother Earth Unlimited, Caritas Manila, the Smokey Mountain Resource Recovery System and the Concerned Citizens Against Pollution.

METROBRIEFS

Young courier caught

POLICE yesterday arrested two boys, aged 12 and 10, for allegedly buying shabu for the mother of one of them in Makati City. Village watcher Ciriaco Cardenas caught the 12-year-old carrying a still undetermined amount of shabu on Zobel Street in Barangay La Paz about 8 a.m., said PO3 Conrad Mapili. Accompanied by a 10-year-old playmate, the 12-year-old allegedly received the drugs, placed in a coin purse, from an unidentified man. The 12-year-old told police he did not know it was shabu and that his mother merely sent him to get the coin purse in exchange for a still undetermined amount of money. The boy's mother is a known drug user, said police, who later freed the boy's companion.

Christian V. Esguerra

Swedish pair robbed

A COUPLE of elderly tourists from Sweden lost nearly P50,000 to three snatchers yesterday in Ermita, Manila. Eorlai, 60, and Margarita Hoh, 54, who were staying at Midland Plaza Hotel on Adriatico Street, told police three men snatched the woman's bag containing $950 while they were walking along Mabini Street in Ermita about 8 a.m. The Hohs said shock kept them from running after the fleeing snatchers.

Sleeping man slain

DRIVER Hernale P. Tamayo, 23, did not wake up to see the dawn yesterday after a drug-crazed man stabbed him to death while he slept in his pedicab in Tondo, Manila Saturday night. Tamayo, of Varona Street, Tondo, Manila was stabbed four times along Reina Regente Street around 11:30 p.m. Saturday, said Detective Raul Olavario of the Western Police District.

Philip C. Tubeza

3 suspects fall

WPD investigators yesterday arrested three of the six men suspected of ganging up on Noel de Mesa, 30, in Pandacan, Manila on Feb. 24. After six days in the hospital, De Mesa died Saturday morning. Detective Virgo Villareal identified the arrested suspects as Jerick Dioquino, 22, Marvin L. Babista, 19, and Arnel J. Velasquez, all of Kahilum 2 Pandacan, Manila. Police are still looking for a Willie who stabbed De Mesa, and two other men. Last Feb. 24, the six men were drinking on Paras Street in Kahilum 2 when De Mesa passed by about 1 a.m. They got into a heated argument until the group ganged up on De Mesa. Before dying, De Mesa was able to tell his sister Joan who attacked him.

Philip C. Tubeza

Rob gang busted

RIZAL Provincial Police Office director Senior Supt. Arturo Tolentino yesterday said a robbery gang in Rizal province was busted with the arrest early this week in Antipolo City of three suspected members—brothers Conre and Jun-Jun Andan, both of Quezon City, and a 16-year-old boy. Tolentino said Arguelles and Conre were seriously wounded when they tried to resist arrest. Tolentino said police seized two homemade .38 caliber revolvers, live ammunition, a slingshot and arrows from the suspects following their arrest after they robbed the passengers of a jeepney Tuesday afternoon. Chief Inspector Manuel Abu reported that instead of surrendering the suspects, said to be members of the Black Jack Gang, opened fire.

Nelson F. Flores

Killers hunted

RIZAL provincial police are searching for at least five suspects in the killing of high school student Marites Gaseta, 17, in Barangay Darangan in Binangonan, Rizal late last week. Supt. Dionisio Hicban, Binangonan municipal police OIC, said the victim's parents found her body, wrapped in a bedsheet, in the house in Darangan early Saturday afternoon. The girl had failed to come home to her parents, also in Binangonan, for the weekend. Neighbors last saw the girl alive Thursday afternoon while entertaining some visitors. Hicban ruled out robbery because no personal items of the victim were reported missing.

Nelson F. Flores

DENNIS SABANGAN

LITTLE FIREFIGHTERS

PLAYFUL young scouts from Adamson University try on firemen's uniforms and hats during the launch of the DILG's "117" emergency assistance program in Camp Crame in Quezon City.

'Daddy' Daning Pagaduan, 85

"DADDY" Daning Pagaduan Sr., of Pasig City, who died last Feb. 28 at the age of 85, was buried at 2 p.m. yesterday at the Pasig Catholic Cemetery after blessing rites at the Kapasigan Chapel.

He is survived by his wife Talying, children Cecil, Rosy, Boying and Baby, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

NOTICE OF AUCTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY given that pursuant to the provision of its Articles of Incorporation By-Laws, The SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB INC. (The Club) will auction to the highest bidder the following individual shareholders certificates, default having been made in payment of outstanding obligations to the Club hereby secured:

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6	0153	000039	Yee Fong "Deli" Chan
7	0158	000140	Antonio "Tony" O. Sy
8	0168	000058	Clarita T. Hai Huat
9	0181	000854	Antonio Manuel A. Dee
10	0182	000056	Nenita P. Gonzales
11	0186	000145	Jeremy Y. Tan
12	0192	000148	Tian Kun K. Tan
13	0197	000125	Alden Vincent A. Go
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The Rules Governing the Auction of Delinquent Shares are available at the Membership Services.

The auction proper shall be held on **March 21,2002** at 10:00 AM at the Jacques Lounge, Subic Bay Yacht Club, Subic Bay Free Port Zone.

For further inquiries, please contact the undersigned at Tel. No. **531 1542**.

(Sgd) **ATTY CANDIDO R. FLOR**
Corporate Secretary

(PDI - March 4, 2002)

Ang Pagbabalik ni Elias Plaridel, a farewell to fairy tales

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

DURING our boyhood, summers were mainly magical. That's looking back at the golden, sunny fields, the clean, lively river, the majestic trees and all what seem now fairy tale details from a lost season.

Young loves are born in summer, so confirmed a California-based poet from Cuyapo.

There were indeed love and adventure during those magical summers out in the sun. But they often existed in a thick, yellowish pocket book, Mga Kuwento ni Lola Basyang (Severino Reyes in real life), whose pages had gone brittle with the years and the eternal pushing of eager fingers.

Summer, for us kids, was a long after-lunch date with Lola Basyang, who would always take us up, up in the clouds, deep into great wilderness, glittering foreign kingdoms, where heroes and heroines warred and wrestled against villains, beasts, plaques and assorted cruelties of their days, en route to living happily ever after.

It was a season of pure, sweet innocence.

After we had cleared the lunch table, washed the dishes and refilled the tall, empty water jugs to be restored and cooled in the old Coca-Cola icebox, we would recline on a long wooden bench, polished brown and shiny by numberless hosting, and keep our date with mythical characters Lola Basyang would send, live and in full color, into our amazed imagination.

Sorry, but that prized coverless volume, a hand-down from my Uncle Totong who had been incarcerated by invading Japanese troops, never to be seen or heard again, is itself nowhere to be found.

That treasure of a book, from what I know, had been abducted by a big flood, washed away one frenzied morning, together with other precious intricacies in that old bamboo-and-nipa house not too far from the pristine river.

***

So why have I been saying all this? Simple. Because summer is here.

The boy, indeed, has grown up and gone old.

But, time and again, summer after summer, he tries to pluck off free hours after lunch to read, read and read.

John Steinbeck's East of Eden was devoured under the shade of a mango tree in my uncle's now-gone field of dreams, a big, big backyard covered with guava trees and fenced around by elegant bamboo poles and a clear, thin swamp.

Hemingway and Somerset Maugham kept us company during those long free afternoons away from school.

The days have grown shorter, but it will not be too different this year. In fact, we've reserved something new and special.

We've just acquired a thick, black-covered volume of 27 stories, yes, 27.

Ang Pagbabalik ni Elias Plaridel at Iba Pang Piling Mga Kuwento, filled with the modern-day masterpieces of Ave Perez Jacob, battle-scarred, multi-awarded writer, is a gift acquired during the book's memorable launching (lunsad-aklat) at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines last Thursday.

***

A few of the stories in the volume, we've had the chance to read some years back.

They were, to put it mildly, raging and therefore very relevant.

It's easy to feel the hand of the "wandering rebel" as Jacob, "one of the original dropouts" had been tagged by contemporaries, lending life to characters from the slums who dwell amid filth and flies, the poor masses or *anakpawis*, in all the well-crafted stories.

The tales are a kick in the ass of the ruling class. Despite their protest and scream against the oppression of the poor, though, and thanks mainly to crafty handling, the stories are quite entertaining, too.

Coming from Jacob's incendiary pen, it would be an understatement to declare that the stories, which only a seasoned member of the wage-earning flock can superbly weave, are no fairytales.

For one, we can hardly wait for the Lenten break before rereading Elias Plaridel, the story of a visiting revolutionary, an arresting mix of Rizal's Elias (in the Noli) and Gregorio del Pilar, the great writer and propagandist of the revolution.

***

Elias Plaridel is there, looking at you, keeping a close watch, warned Rogelio Ordonez, an accomplished writer and Jacob's fellow professor at PUP, in his closing talk during the book launch.

As can be expected, the stories in the volume are as tough as the storyteller himself, an irreverent, dedicated, spellbinding, disturbing, at times loud, but on the whole lovable man, so swooned Dr. Amalia Rosales, Dean of the PUP College of Arts, in her frank and heartwarming introductory message.

A man most charmed by Jacob's masterpieces was Prof. Gandhi Cardenas, head of the PUP Faculty of Filipinology. He rolled and pushed the pages of his written tribute to Jacob into an empty bottle of Torres 10 brandy. He then tossed the sealed bottle into the nearby Pasig with the prayer that it reached Europe, and hopefully land in the hands of those who have something to do with the Nobel Prize.

Later, in the post-launch boozing at a karaoke bar outside the campus, it was Ave Jacob, balding and now sharply resembling Lenin with his cap and gray suit, to sing the main line from a Heber Bartolome classic: "Ayaw ni Nena, nguni't siya'y nagigipit."

The penniless teen princess did not like to sell herself, but she's so poor and hungry, she had to yield.

That's the story of the Philippines, yelled Jacob as the darkened karaoke room throbbed with smoke, beer, brandy and merriment.

They are sisters, Ave Jacob declared of Heber's Nena and Freddie Aguilar's Magdalena.

Nena and Magdalena, just like most main characters in Jacob's collection of cruel-city tales, are not bound to live happily ever after.

No pro-Erap . . .

From page A25

bloody Labor Day march to Malacañang last year.

"Most of the people prefer the peaceful situation that we have now," Malonzo said. "They know that the government is doing well."

If there were indeed threats to destabilize President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration, the details were still premature, according to PNP's Maralit. But he raised the threat of arrest against Lumbao based on a standing arrest warrant.

This was apparently the same warrant issued in connection with the rebellion charges filed against him for his participation in the May 1 siege of Malacañang.

"He (Lumbao) is the subject of our manhunt operation and he is one of those being monitored particularly by our intelligence community, which is trying to determine his plans to mobilize people in sympathy for Estrada's plight," said Maralit.

On Saturday, Ms Macapagal herself said no destabilization moves, like the May 1 and Jan. 20 attempts, would eyer succeed.

Claudine is the reason we are still together–Rico

By Remy M. Umerez

RICO YAN and his one true love, Claudine Barretto.

IF ONE were to ask Rico Yan about his relationship with Claudine Barretto two years ago, he would have given you the standard show biz reply: "We are the best of friends."

Ask the same question now and Rico will answer straight from his heart. He is very much in love, and he wants to share it with the world.

But is it sheer coincidence that Rico is now opening up on a topic he used to consider "private," just as Star Cinema is about to release "Got 2 Believe," where he stars opposite his one true love?

Whether on television, via the soap "Saan Ka Man Naroroon," or on the big screen ("Dahil Mahal na Mahal Kita"), Rico and Claudine have fared well as a love eam, and there is a clamor for them to do another movie. That request has been granted, and no less than Olivia Lamasan directs "Got 2 Believe," a love story calculated to weave magic not only in the hearts of moviegoers but at the box-office as well.

Claudine plays a wedding planner who, in the course of her work, meets Rico, a celebrity photographer. They don't like each other at the start, but as fate, or the script, will have it, the two soon find themselves working together in a project.

Without hesitating, Rico tells us the magic qualities he found in Claudine. "She possesses all the M's I could think of. She is *malambing* (caring), *maasikaso* (thoughful) and very motherly. She is very supportive, and she is always there when something is bugging me. Even when I have problems with my business, she helps me out. We have gone through a lot of sharing, both in good times and bad.

"She is the reason why we remain intact. She knows how to handle situations. She blends things well."

He also cites open communication, patience, understanding and trust, as important factors which make their relationship last.

Today, the two mark their fourth year together.

Had there been quarrels in the past?

"We argue over petty things," he answers. "What movie to see, food to eat on a date, or the choice of music to listen to inside the car. Once, we were heavily affected by an issue which was not of our own doing. Show biz people are always the target of rumors and malicious gossip, and if we give in to hearsay, we would never have lasted this long.

"Lack of sleep also causes problems, and when that happens, I tend to be careful. But when she has her monthly period, don't even attempt to argue. I steer clear of trouble by saying 'yes, ma'am.'"

Rico doesn't see himself tying the knot with Claudine this year or next. He doesn't want to discuss weddings, but he knows how many children he wants to raise.

"I want a big family, and every time I bring up the subject with Claudine, she makes faces," he says. "She says two children is enough so she can devote quality time rearing them. I want to have five or six children, never mind if times are hard. I'll find a way to bring them up."

EVELYN Alvaran Cruz (extreme left), the woman behind Hair Asia, joins actress host Lorna Tolentino and winners of the 2001 Battle of Champions hair and makeup competition held at the World Trade Center last November.

Stars host Hair Asia show at WTC

FOLLOWING the success of the Battle of Champions hair and makeup competition, which attracted hundreds of participants and exhibitors at the World Trade Center in a whole-day show last Nov. 28, Hair Asia now presents its 11th National Open Championship for Hairstyling and Makeup.

The Hair Asia national championship will be held tomorrow at the World Trade Center in Pasay City, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. It will be hosted by Fanny Serrano, Melanie Marquez and organizer and Hair Asia publisher Evelyn Alvaran-Cruz.

When the Battle of Champions was held last November, Cruz observed that the beauty industry was in a boom even when the economy was going bust. "Now there are more players," she said. "Of course the economic downturn is also affecting the beauty industry, but it is also bringing out the best in the players."

She hopes that tomorrow's national championship will also help bring out the best in the beauty industry players.

Hair Asia is also inviting both new and seasoned salon professionals to avail themselves of the latest in aesthetic equipment which will be on show in the annual Cosmetic Trade Fair, a market of beauty care products that has always been a part of the annual Hair Asia events.

"Buying the products here will obviously save you more money than if you buy them abroad," says Cruz.

The cosmetic trade fair offers discounts of up to 60 percent, according to the organizer. Seminars will also be held on the tricks and tools of hairstyling and makeup trade.

For more information, call Hair Asia at 926-9480, 415-7977, or 415-7988, or visit its offices at 35 Judge Jimenez St., Kamuning, Quezon City.

I was the only one trying to make the marriage work–Regine T

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

"I WAS the one who asked for it and he didn't stop me from leaving. He knows he has a lot of shortcomings. I tried my best to make the marriage work, but I guess I was the only one trying. I gave up because there was no effort on his part to make it work."

That is **Regine Tolentino,** 23, talking about her husband **Lander Vera-Perez,** whom she married when she was only 18, and their separation. They have two children, **Azucena Reign,** 3, and **Alyssandra Reigen,** 1.

The couple headed for Splitsville last November. Regine now lives with her daughters in a condo unit in San Juan, while Lander stays in their conjugal house.

Regine denies that a third party was involved in the separation. "The problem was just between us," she explains. "We had problems which added up to the tension in our relationship and we realized we could no longer live together.

"During the entire time that we were together, Lander was never affectionate nor appreciative of what I did. He was not supportive of my decisions. I didn't feel at all that he was proud of me. I would dance on TV and when I got home, he wouldn't even say a thing about it. I think he didn't want me to work."

Regine also responds to the talk that she has been trying to project a sexy image by wearing figure-hugging outfits.

"What's wrong with wanting to look good for my husband," she says. "I didn't want to be called *losyang*. There's no other reason."

After the separation, Regine went on nationwide TV to explain what caused the breakup. Her in-laws, the illustrious Vera-Perez clan, reportedly took it against her.

"I didn't say everything on TV because I respect Lander and his family," she says. "I still don't talk to my in-laws and I don't know what will happen."

She also has yet to talk with Lander since she left their house.

"We only talk through text, but there hasn't been any lengthy phone conversation and I think it's better that way," she offers. "When I go out of the house, I text him so he can go there and see the kids."

Although she hasn't totally closed the doors on Lander, Regine says reconciliation is rather far-fetched at this point. "It's not worth it to reconcile now. He has done so many things which I haven't forgiven yet. But I'm not bitter. Lander will always be the father of my kids. He is a good dad. He was there for me at a certain time of my life and I'll always love him for that."

Now that she's a single parent, Regine, who makes occasional TV appearances and co-hosts GMA 7's weekly "Digital Quiz Show" (with **Paolo Bediones**), vows to revive her show biz career.

Before she got married, she was a semi-regular on ABS-CBN's Sunday noontime show, "Asap." When she was a guest on the show late last year, director **Johnny Manahan** asked her if she wanted to return to the show.

"I'm so glad Talent Center welcomed me back," she says. "I plan to be more visible now. I can even do movies again."

Kiss and cry

ROBIN Padilla made **Angelika de la Cruz** cry during the shooting of their kissing scene in Viva Films' "Hari ng Selda."

It was not intentional, however. Angelika was understandably nervous since it was her first kissing scene. When director **Deo Fajardo** yelled "Cut," Angelika ran to her dressing room and cried.

"I was really nervous during the take because it was my first time to do something like that in a movie," Angelika recalls. "*Sa sobrang nerbiyos, naiyak ako.* But I didn't show Robin that I cried. *Nakakahiya din sa kanya.*"

No one on the set had a clue that Angelika, who was co-starring with Robin for the first time, had a problem with the scene because the take went smoothly. Robin, who helped write the screenplay of the movie, even took Angelika aside and explained to her exactly what the scene required. But despite his reassurance and the fact that he didn't take advantage of her during the take, Angelika was extremely tense and nervous.

"I really couldn't help but cry after that particular scene," says the young actress.

But when the two lead stars viewed the rushes of the kissing scene at the LVN Studios recently, they were both pleased with the results.

Angelika says Robin was a real gentleman, doing things for her, for costar **Raven Villanueva** as well as everyone else on the set. But Angelika insists Robin was more like an attentive older brother to her.

Was it because her dad, who helps manage her career, was also on the set?

Angelika says her dad never interfered in the shooting. He didn't even question her decision to accept the movie even when it included a kissing scene with Robin.

"I knew this movie would be a little difficult because I would have a kissing scene for the first time, and with Robin Padilla *pa*," she says. "But I was even the one who convinced my dad that we should accept the project. I told him it's a good movie and it was about time I was allowed to do a kissing scene. After all, I'm no longer a teenager. I'm 20 years old."

She says shooting scenes inside the New Bilibid Prisons compound in Muntinlupa "wasn't scary. In fact, it was even exciting."

"Hari ng Selda" is the first in Angelika's six-picture, exclusive contract with Viva Films. Her next movie is a comedy-romance, "Stupid Love," opposite comic rapper **Andrew E.**

ANGELIKA de la Cruz pays lip service to her first-time leading man, Robin Padilla.

SINGLE MOM Regine Tolentino vows to be more visible again on TV and in movies.

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1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 (DOLBY)	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4 (DTS)	FROM HELL

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4 (DTS)	13 GHOSTS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	13 GHOSTS
4	HINOG SA PILIT
5	ALI

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	13 GHOSTS

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1	13 GHOSTS
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	KAULAYAW

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DTS)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	HINOG SA PILIT
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	FROM HELL
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	BATAS NG LANSANAGAN
4	BATAS NG LANSANAGAN

***Movies are subject to change without prior notice**

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

CMG INTERNATIONAL

PREMIERE CINEMA THX NOW SHOWING

THIR13EN GHOSTS

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS

NOW SHOWING

galleria
632-9115-16 / 633-7641 loc. 279

1 THX	SHALLOW HAL
2	ALI
3	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	13 GHOSTS
7	RAT RACE
8	VANILLA SKY
9	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10	IKAW LAMANG . . .

ermita
536-7809 to 12

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	ALI
3	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4	13 GHOSTS
5	SHALLOW HAL
6	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
7	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

metro east -PASIG
680-8193 / 8080

1	SHALLOW HAL
2	13 GHOSTS
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	ALI
5	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
6	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
7	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
8	IKAW LAMANG . . .

novaliches
935-2929 to 30

1	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2	RAT RACE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	ALI
5	SHALLOW HAL
6	IKAW LAMANG . . .
7	GOT 2 BELIEVE
8	13 GHOSTS

imus
(046) 471-8188

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	ALI
4	13 GHOSTS
5	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

bacolod
(034) 444-0433 / 0459

1	KATE & LEOPOLD
2	THE OTHERS
3	IKAW LAMANG . . .
4	VANILLA SKY
5	HEARTS IN ATLANTIS
6	CORKY ROMANO

iloilo
(033) 336-3077 / 3078

1	FROM HELL
2	CORKY ROMANO
3	DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	KATE & LEOPOLD
6	COLLATERAL DAMAGE

star mills-
San Fernando, PAMPANGA

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	FROM HELL
6	FROM HELL

malabon citisquare-
soon to open.

LATE NIGHT SCREENING @ GALLERIA THX

MAR. 1-2, 2002
11:00pm.

how-2-reach-us:

email: htc@netasia-mnl.net
http://www.robinsonsmovieworld.com
call-a-movie 536- 7812

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

'American . . .

From page A30

happening to Tony Gloria and his co-producers, ABS-CBN, because they are responsible filmmakers who can make more good movies in the future.

What do Fil-American viewers think of "American Adobo"? Some revealing quotes which could teach other producers a thing or two: In New York—Alex: "*Sana gumawa pa uli ng ganitong pelikula dahil natutuwa ang mga* Filipino *dito pag nakakapanood ng mga* Filipino movies."

Lemuel: "*Sampung taon na ako dito, ngayon lang ako nakapanood ng pelikulang Tagalog!*"

Evelyn: "I think *halos lahat na*-cover *nila*."

Ron Domingo: "I'm proud to see a Filipino movie distributed here in the US."

Ferdie Jacinto: "The movie is very real, it makes us feel lighter. It's good that they put it on the big screen, what's really happening here."

Betty Resurreccion: "*Magaling si* Laurice Guillen."

Lady: "We were expecting to watch a 4 p.m. screening but it's already sold out, so we'll come back tomorrow and watch it at 7 o'clock. *Hindi ko inexpect na ganito kadami ang taong manonood.*"

Old Man: "*Hindi na mahuhuli ang* Filipino film *sa* American film. The best!"

Jun Baltonatuna: "Ok *ang pelikula, sana gumawa pa ng marami!*"

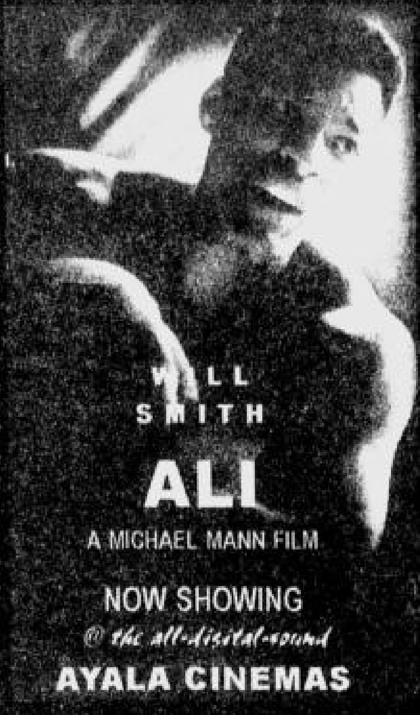
AXN Challenge

THE AXN channel is giving adventure-racing and eco-tourism enthusiasts in the Philippines a chance to compete in the first-ever Hong Kong AXN Challenge with AXN's Adventure Race, Subic Bay 2002 Competition on March 24.

The winners of the six-hour race will represent the Philippines in the International Category of the Hong Kong AXN Challenge on April 20, competing with winners from India, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. For details, call Joey at 910-1106.

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	GOT 2 BELIEVE . . .
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	ALI
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	13 GHOST
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	SHALLOW HAL
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	GOT 2 BELIEVE
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	HINOG SA PILIT
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ODEON-2	13 GHOST
ROBEN	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE / AMERICAN PIE 2
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
REMAR	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
REMAR-2	HINOG SA PILIT
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
B	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	RAT RACE
CINEMA-2	13 GHOST
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	REBULOSYONARYO
CINEMA-2	HALIK SA AKING LUPA
CINEMA-3	MARSHALL DICK
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	FROM HELL
CINEMA-6	KATE & LEOPOLD
CINEMA-7	IKAW LANG HANGGANG NGAYON
CINEMA-8	KUNG IKAW AY ISANG PANAGINIP
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	RIDING CARS w/ BOYS
CINEMA-12	VANILLA SKY
CINEMA-14	IKAW LANG HANGGANG NGAYON
CINEMA-15	IKAW LANG HANGGANG NGAYON
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	RAT RACE
CINEMA-2	13 GHOST
CINEMA-3	SHALLOW HAL
CINEMA-4	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
CINEMA-5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-6	ALI
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID



What Drives You

THE POWER T0 BREAK FREE!

WILL SMITH
ALI
A MICHAEL MANN FILM
NOW SHOWING
@ the all-digital-sound
AYALA CINEMAS

Witness the lifestory of the greatest boxer ever and play Timezone's REAL PUNCHER machine for FREE!

Plus! Get the chance to win a complete boxing gear from Caltex & Rustans or gift certificates from Red Corner Fitness & Boxing Club!

Valid only for every 2 ALI tickets purchased at *Glorietta 4 Cinemas!*

This only happens at the best movie place, the all-digital-sound Ayala Cinemas!
Promo Period is from March 1-14, 2002

AYALA CINEMAS · Vortex · Rustan's · TIMEZONE

AYALA CINEMAS
ARTFILM - GREENBELT
NOW SHOWING
Art Film

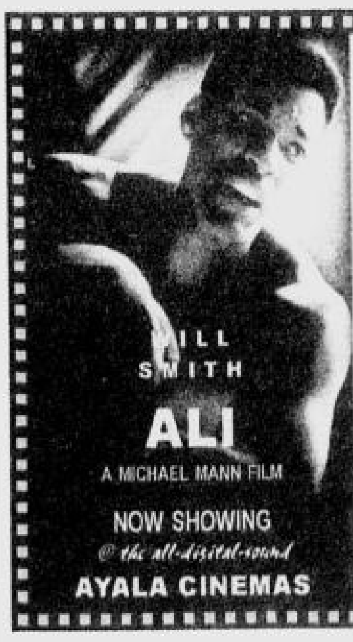
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.

Sexy... Hot... Exciting...
SALSA!
A Film By JoyceSherman Buñuel

At age 24, Rémi Bonnel, brilliant pianist, abandons Chopin and Toulouse to play the music he has secretly loved for years - Salsa! He heads for Paris, the salsa capital of Europe, only to discover to his great surprise, that nobody wants a white boy in Latin band! Felipe, his Cuban friend, sets him straight: " You don't have the Latino look, muchacho! Today, if your are not Cubano or Columbiano, you are out!". Undaunted, Rémi deliberately takes on the identity, accent and complexion of an unemployed alien in a city where most foreigners will do almost anything to become French. Barreto, 75, the legendary Cuban composer, who is about to close down the once famous Casa Cubana, offers Rémi a job giving dance lessons to the locals. It is here that Rémi falls in love with Nathalie. Her family's "secrets and lies" reveal parental links to Barreto. Do these links explain why this shy beauty ought to be a bomb on the dance floor?

WINNER!
Best Feature - Avignon/New York Film Festival
A French Film with English Subtitles

NOKIA · FORTUNE Tobacco Corporation



WILL SMITH
ALI
A MICHAEL MANN FILM
NOW SHOWING
@ the all-digital-sound
AYALA CINEMAS

What Drives You
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Witness the lifestory of the greatest boxer ever and play Timezone's REAL PUNCHER machine for FREE!

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Glorietta 4 Cinemas!

This only happens at the best movie place,
the all-digital-sound Ayala Cinemas!
Promo Period is from March 1-14, 2002.

Vortex · AYALA CINEMAS · Rustan's · TIMEZONE · SKYFILMS
PER DTI NCR PERMIT NO. AI-139 SERIES OF 2002

AYALA CINEMAS
ARTFILM - GREENBELT
OPENS MARCH 6 (Wed.)
Art Film

ACADEMY AWARD NOMINEE
BEST FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM

"A fiercely brilliant film of such wrenching impact, nonstop drive and unpredictability that watching it becomes an exhilarating ride."
-- Michael Wilmington
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

amores perros

WINNER - BEST FILM !
2001 ARIELS / TOKYO INT FILMFEST / BOGOTA FILMFEST / BOSTON SOCIETY / BRITISH ACADEMY / CAMERIMAGE / CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL / FANTASPORTO / INDEPENDENT SPIRIT / NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW(USA)

A boldly conceived and intricately plotted drama of love, loss, retribution and redemption, *AMORES PERROS* has already been hailed by the NEW YORK TIMES as "the first classic of the new decade." Ever since its acclaimed and award-winning world premiere at Cannes, this directorial debut by Alejandro González Iñárritu has made a sensation on the international film festival circuit, where it has been praised as a film of outstanding power, originality, and raw beauty. It has also won a stunning array of prizes from both juries and audiences alike, proclaiming not only its impressive artistic achievements, but also its undeniable and visceral power to excite people in new and unexpected ways.

AMORES PERROS raises provocative questions about the human condition at the same time that the film daringly recapitulates and reinvents different styles of Latin cinema. The result is a vivid and intricate mosaic of classic themes rendered in original -- and unforgettable ways.

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R)

NOKIA · SKYFILMS · INQUIRER

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41

RAT RACE - GP 12:10, 2:35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:50	13 GHOST - R 18 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00	SHALLOW HAL - P 13 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
MOTHMAN PROPHECIES - P 13 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40	GOT 2 BELIEVE 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45	ALI - P13 12:40, 3:50, 7:00, 10:10

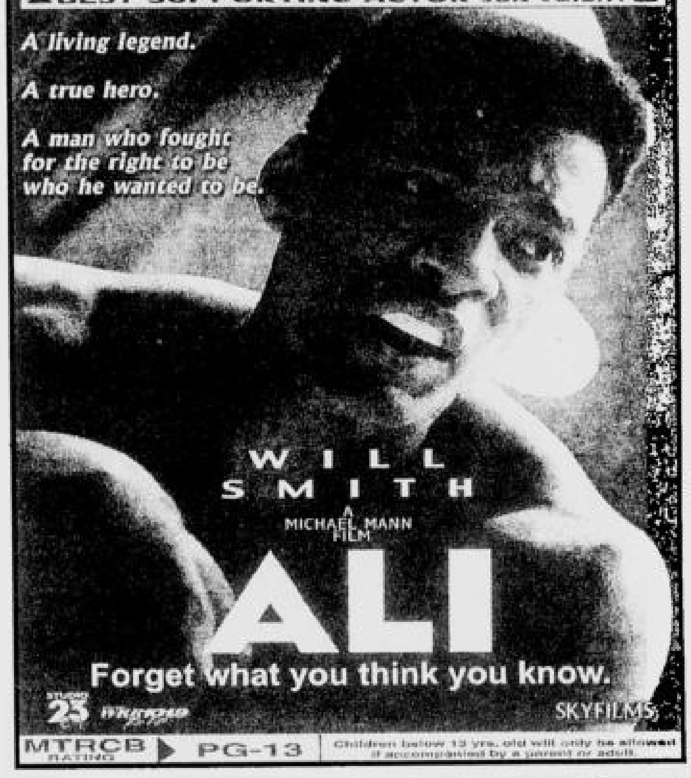
Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri.,11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1	SHALLOW HAL 10:40 / 12:55 / 3:10 / 5:25 / 7:40 / 9:55 P 13
2	THIRTEEN GHOST 10:35 / 12:50 / 3:05 / 5:20 / 7:35 / 10:00 R 18

Matinee: P80.00 - Screenings before 5:00pm, Monday thru Friday (Free Seating)
Reserved Seating: P120.00 - After 5:00pm; Saturday, Sunday, Holidays.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA

MUSIC MUSEUM
MUSIC MUSEUM March 8, 2002 PINAY MUSICFEST 9:00 PM
March 9, 2002 ROCK AGAINST PIRACY
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL .



4TH "TRULY THE GREATEST" HIT DAY !

ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS
BEST ACTOR-WILL SMITH
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR-JON VOIGHT

A living legend.
A true hero.
A man who fought for the right to be who he wanted to be.

WILL SMITH
A MICHAEL MANN FILM
ALI
Forget what you think you know.
SKYFILMS

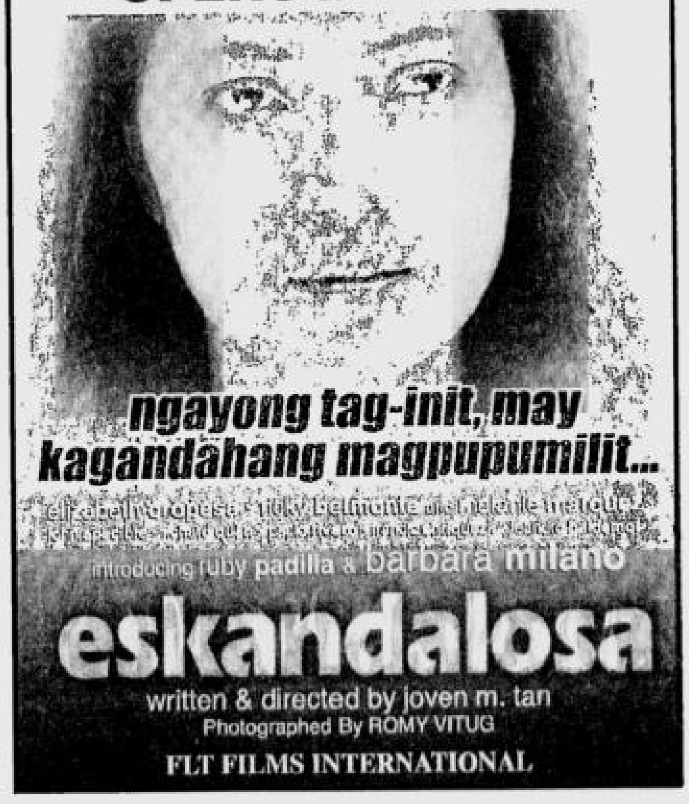
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.

Hot Date Movie! Not for Desperate Virgins Only!
SPICY SPOOF of SEX TEEN COMEDIES STARTS MARCH 6!

MTRCB RATING ▶ R Restricted | Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.

NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
They served you *Breakfast*. They gave you *Pie*. Now we're gonna stuff your face.
sony.com/NotAnotherTeen

Distributed by COLUMBIA PICTURES



MTRCB RATING R-18 | Strictlyfor ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admited

OPENS MARCH 6

ngayong tag-init, may kagandahang magpupumilit...
introducing ruby padilla & barbara milano
eskandalosa
written & directed by joven m. tan
Photographed By ROMY VITUG
FLT FILMS INTERNATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Fix what we can, leave alone what we can't

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

"ACCEPT responsibility for the times when you've hurt others because you lacked inner peace. Make amends to them when you can."

I read this passage in a booklet I was given recently. It's titled "Peace Therapy," written by **Carol Ann Morrow** and published by the Daughters of St. Paul.

Without going into detail, I put that passage into practice recently. To compliment that passage, allow me to share with you another one from the same booklet.

"Be at peace with your circumstances. Allow what you have no power over to just be as it is. Where you do have power and something needs changing, do what you can and then let go. You don't have to fix everything."

What am I trying to get across? If you're going through a personal issue right now, and it's affecting someone you love deeply, it is really better to make a move to correct the situation, especially if the solution is within your grasp. Pride be damned, just do it! Humility, after all, has never harmed anyone, or made anyone a lesser person.

For those of us who are raising our kids on our own, we should always remember that our kids need and deserve to have a relationship with both their parents, even if we are incapable of sustaining a friendship with our erstwhile partners.

What we can't fix (meaning if there's no way to reconcile), we let be. What we can fix (meaning words said out of anger coupled with the suspension of weekend visits) we tackle as straightforwardly and sincerely as possible.

The perfect partner

On a lighter note, after spending three nights in Hong Kong with **Boy Abunda**, I realized that he's the easiest travelling companion to get along with. There was no pressure for over-togetherness. We made time to have dinner together or meet up at a shop we both liked, but we never felt that we had to do everything together.

We savored a delicious dinner at Golden Bull, my favorite Vietnamese restaurant at Ocean Centre. Boy and **Bong** let me do the ordering and we weren't embarrassed to ask for an additional order of their very tasty, mildly spicy beef filet.

We all loved, regardless of the cholesterol, the jumbo prawns grilled in a generous amount of garlicky butter. We enjoyed wrapping our fried spring rolls in crisp lettuce leaves.

I told Boy not to buy me anything for Christmas and my birthday, saying I'd claim my present in Hong Kong. I got a beautiful, uniquely shaped bag from Boy, which I got to personally choose.

Boy really is the perfect partner. He's appreciative, hard working, well read, intelligent, has a great sense of humor, and he doesn't take himself too seriously. Plus he can be a gentleman and gallantly carry my 10 bottles of Evian from 7-Eleven back to our hotel.

From the Peninsula's mini-bar, a bottle cost HK $50. It was barely HK $7 at 7-Eleven. Hello? It certainly is best to be practical.

Lastly, Boy and I nearly died of laughter while buying make-up at Shu Uemura at the airport. I've always taken it upon myself to choose and supply Boy's makeup.

I had tried the Nobara line of cream foundation. Depending on how you layer it, you can control the amount of coverage it gives. The shades are very natural and look great under TV's harsh lights. I convinced Boy it was time to switch brands.

When I was choosing Boy's natural shade of lipstick and after I'd tested one on him that was a bit too pale, the sales representative told me, "This shade is too white for your husband. He has to get something with a bit more brown."

It would have been cool to let her assume we were such a hip couple that we bought and applied make-up together, but we had to correct her notion and admit that we were merely co-hosts.

'American Adobo' updates

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

IT started out as a hunch: that there was a market in the States for a film about Film-Americans' lives. Thus, **Tony Gloria** decided to test the waters by producing "American Adobo" and releasing it not just in the Philippines, but in the US as well.

The film directed by **Laurice Guillen** was a hit here, but the big question still remained: would it click in the US?

This was a crucial question because the film had a huge budget (because it was shot in the States), and couldn't recover its capital just from its earnings here in the Philippines.

Also, its US distributor was getting a big percentage of the gross, so the movie had to do well so that it could make some real money.

Well, the good news from the States is that the film is doing very well there, too. Of course, the majority of its audience is made up of Fil-Americans, but the impressive thing is, they are patronizing the movie in droves. In fact, in a number of theaters, tickets to certain screenings have been sold out.

Here are updates on the film's showing in the States, as of Feb. 27: In Manhattan, it is on its fifth consecutive week at the Village East Cinema.

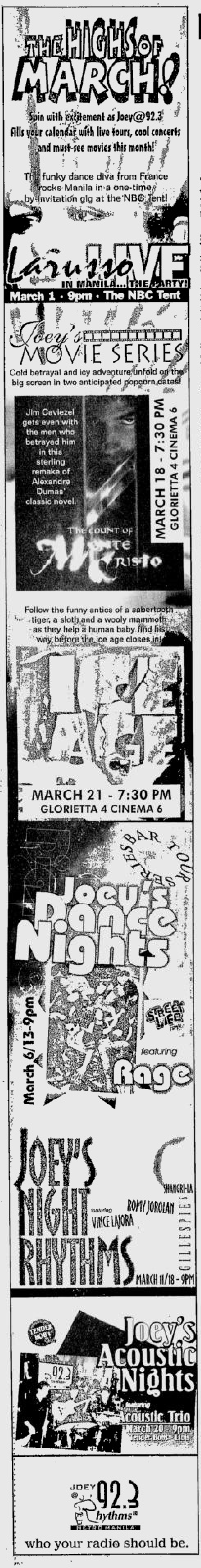
In Los Angeles, it's on its fourth week at the Laemmie Pasadena Playhouse and at the Edwards Park place in Irvine, Orange County. In San Francisco, it's also on its fourth week at the Landmark Opera Plaza.

Even better, "American Adobo" is set to open on March 22 in Seattle, at the 7 Gables' Landmark Metro theater, and in Honolulu at the Wallace Restaurant Row 9 theater. On April 12, it will start its run in Chicago at the Landmark Century Cinema. Other April engagements are in San Diego and the DC/Maryland/Virginia area.

How long will the film play in the States? We've learned that it will take eight months before the movie has pretty much covered the locations where there are substantial Fil-American populations. Think of all the money (in dollars) that the film will earn during that long time frame!

Well, we're glad it's

AMERICAN/ A29



THE HIGHS OF MARCH!
Spin with excitement as Joey@92.3 fills your calendar with live tours, cool concerts and must-see movies this month!

The funky dance diva from France rocks Manila in a one-time, by-invitation gig at the NBC Tent!
Larusso LIVE IN MANILA... THE PARTY!
March 1 · 9pm · The NBC Tent

Joey's MOVIE SERIES
Cold betrayal and icy adventure unfold on the big screen in two anticipated popcorn dates!
Jim Caviezel gets even with the men who betrayed him in this sterling remake of Alexandre Dumas' classic novel.
The Count of Monte Cristo
MARCH 18 - 7:30 PM
GLORIETTA 4 CINEMA 6

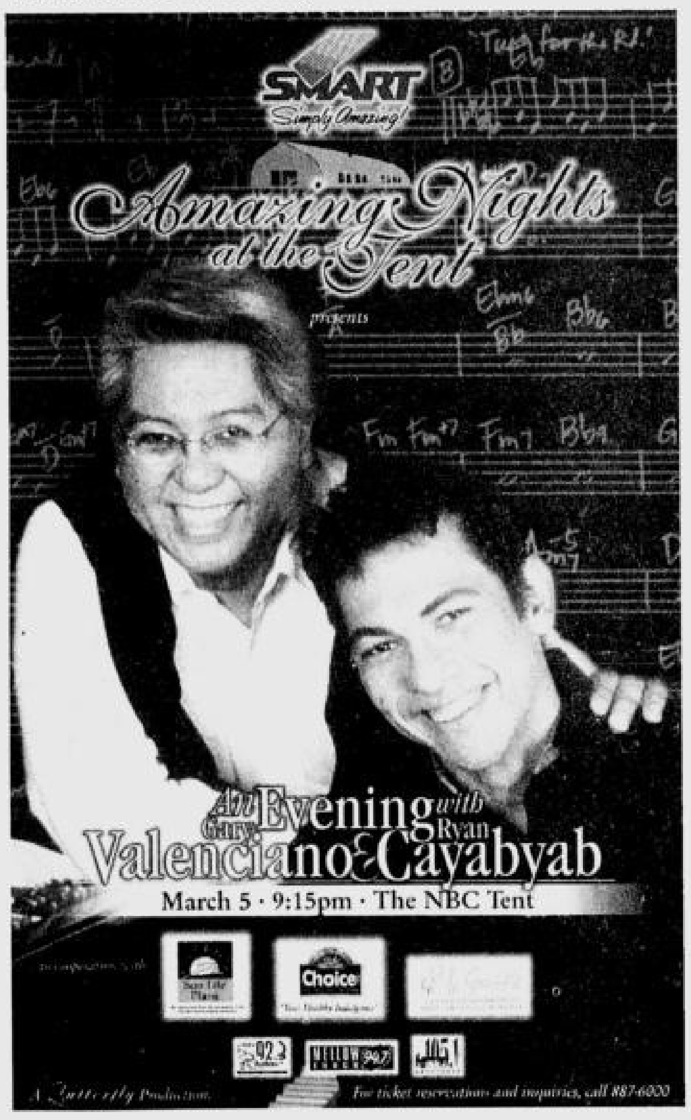
Follow the funny antics of a sabertooth tiger, a sloth and a wooly mammoth as they help a human baby find his way before the ice age closes in!
ICE AGE
MARCH 21 - 7:30 PM
GLORIETTA 4 CINEMA 6

BAR TOUR SERIES
Joey's Dance Nights
March 6/13-9pm
Street Life
featuring Rage

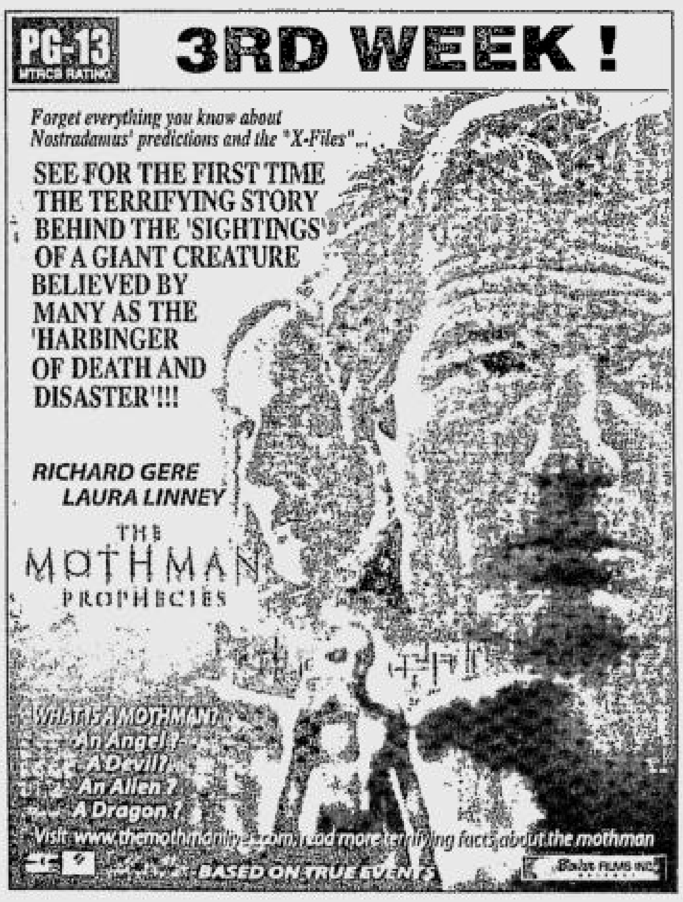
JOEY'S NIGHT RHYTHMS
featuring Vince Lajora
Romy Jorolan
Shangri-La
Gillespies
MARCH 11/18 - 9PM

Joey's Acoustic Nights
featuring Acoustic Trio
March 20 · 9pm
Tender Bob's

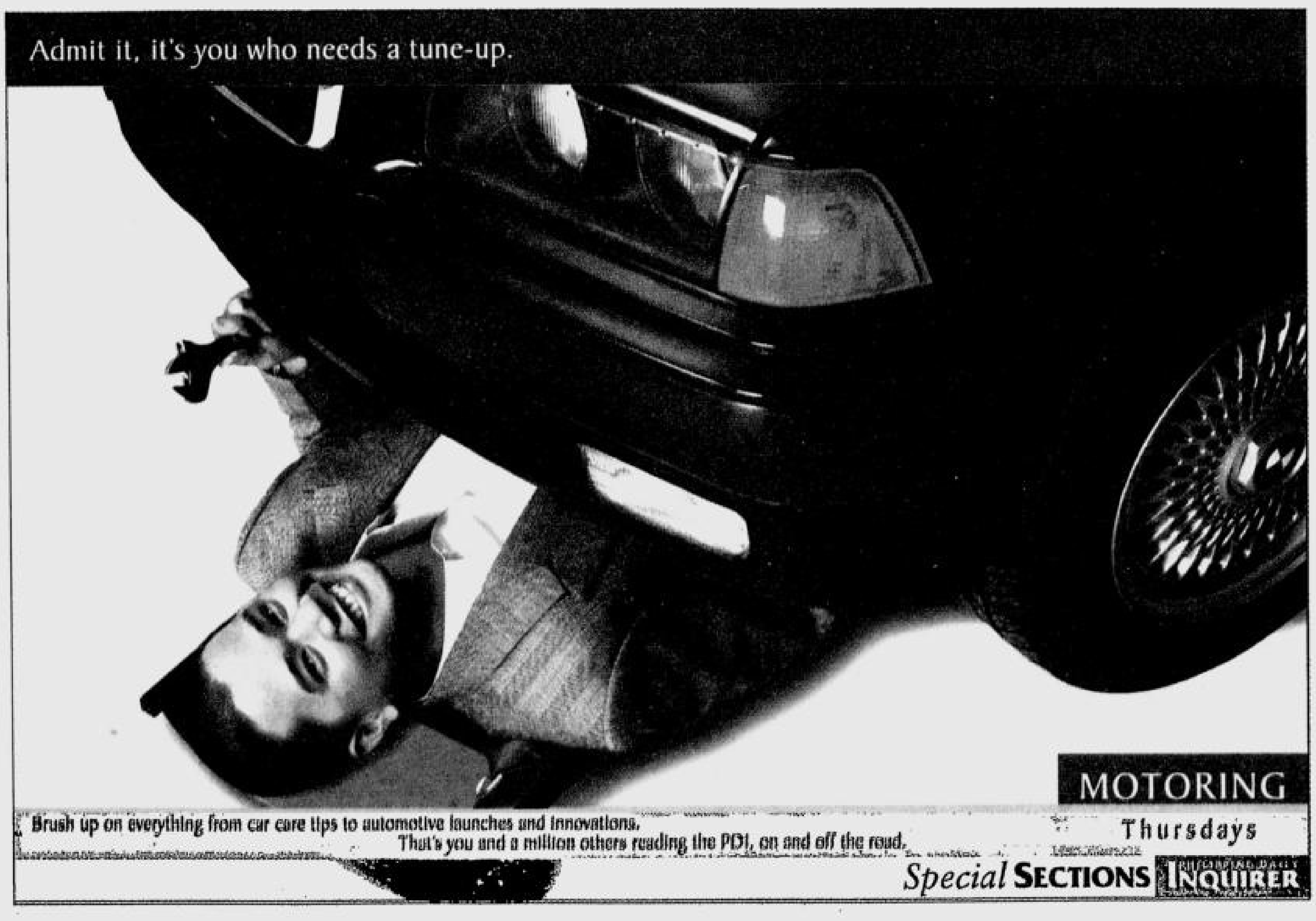
JOEY @ 92.3 Rhythms
METRO MANILA
who your radio should be.



SMART Simply Amazing!
Amazing Nights at the Tent presents
An Evening with Gary Valenciano & Ryan Cayabyab
March 5 · 9:15pm · The NBC Tent
Choice
A Butterfly Production
For ticket reservations and inquiries, call 887-6000



PG-13 MTRCB RATING
3RD WEEK !
Forget everything you know about Nostradamus' predictions and the "X-Files"...
SEE FOR THE FIRST TIME THE TERRIFYING STORY BEHIND THE 'SIGHTINGS' OF A GIANT CREATURE BELIEVED BY MANY AS THE 'HARBINGER OF DEATH AND DISASTER'!!!
RICHARD GERE
LAURA LINNEY
THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
WHAT IS A MOTHMAN?
An Angel?
A Devil?
An Alien?
A Dragon?
Visit www.themothmanlives.com, read more terrifying facts about the mothman
BASED ON TRUE EVENTS



Admit it, it's you who needs a tune-up.
MOTORING
Thursdays
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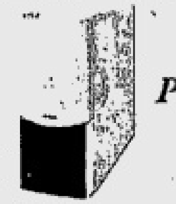

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BUSINESS

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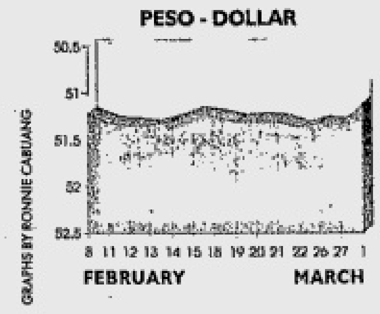

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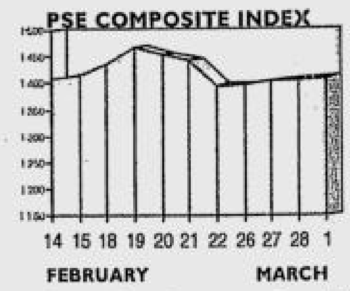
STOCK MARKET

Stocks seen to rise



(See stock market report on Page B4)

LOCAL stocks are seen to firm up above the 1,400 level this week as the market got over the jitters triggered by the pullout from Southeast Asian markets of the California Public Employees Retirement System, the largest pension fund in the United States.

The Philippine stock exchange composite index inched up by 14.04 points or about one percent week-on-week to close at 1,410.42 on Friday, fueled by the ascent of blue chips but hardly

STOCKS/ B4

Gov't readies legal action against used-car importers

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry is preparing the groundwork for the government's plan to take legal action against auctioneers of second-hand, imported vehicles which it wanted to shut down because these were driving American and Japanese assemblers out of business.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said: "I believe that these importation and auctions are illegal and we are currently looking into what legal action to take against these auctioneers in Subic, Valenzuela and Malinta."

Roxas' announcement came a week after the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (Amcham) and the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Philippines (JCCI) appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo to stop the "explosion" of used-vehicle imports that was threatening to turn the Philippines into a "dumping ground" for used vehicles from other markets.

Roxas said he had instructed Trade and Industry Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr., a lawyer, to determine what specific government agency or agencies should file a case against the auctioneers.

"We want to know whether it should be the Bureau of Customs because the auctioneers violate the Customs Code. Should it be the Land Transportation Office which takes care of car registrations? Or does the Board Of Investments has jurisdiction over the case because it oversees the Motor Vehicle Development Program," he said.

Amcham and JCCI said they were prepared to assist the Department of Trade and Industry and the BOC to develop legal mechanisms to end this damaging practice.

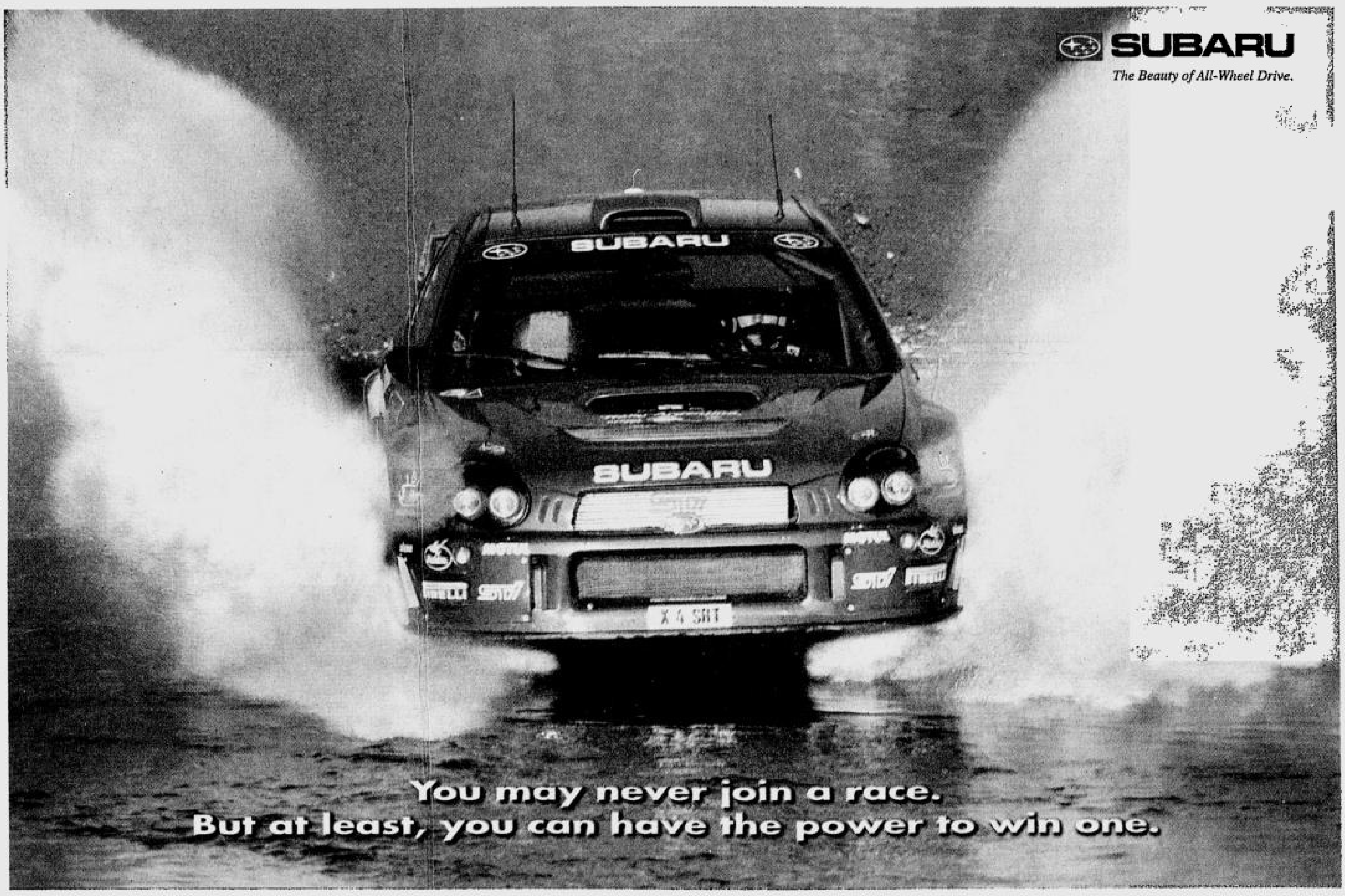
The auction of used imported vehicles—such as scooters, sedans, vans, sport utility vehicles, trucks and construction equipment—started in the Subic Freeport zone during the Estrada administration. The auctions, which sold vehicles that are at least five years and converted from right- to left-hand drive — were a hit and clones sprouted in Valenzuela and Malinta.

As the influx of second-hand imports gobbled up sales of brand-new vehicles, American and Japanese assemblers, which pumped in billions of dollars for their factories and parts-making units, have appealed to the President to impose a ban on used-vehicle imports similar to Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. Aside from the survival of the automotive industry, Amcham and JCCI cited the serious risks to health and public safety posed by the used-vehicle imports.

Roxas said the DTI was also mulling over short-term solutions to the horde of used-vehicle imports in the country. Roxas said the DTI was studying a proposal by the Philippine Truck Manufacturers Association to regulate the importation of passenger vans into the country.

Roxas said that only three types of used vehicles were allowed entry into the country: automobiles owned by *balikbayans*; special-purpose vehicles such as ambulances and garbage trucks, and second-hand, diesel-powered, 10-seater vans.

Roxas said that dropping vans from the list of eligible vehicles should reduce the number of vehicles sold in the Subic, Malinta and Valenzuela auctions.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Gov't to slash tariff on 1,406 products to 1%

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG will issue on March 15 an executive order slashing to one percent the duties on 1,406 agricultural products, raw materials and semi-processed goods not produced locally, according to Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II.

The move comes in response to appeals from local producers for lower production costs, Roxas said.

He declined to identify which products would be covered by the tariff cuts but he claimed that this move would give domestic producers a shot in the arm by lowering the cost of their inputs.

Roxas said the government had previously planned on issuing two EOs for the tariff cuts—the first for 806 products and the second for 600—in early January before Congress resumed its sessions. Tariff adjustments through executive fiat can only be made when Congress (which is the traditional venue for tariff reforms) is not in session.

But the Cabinet failed to reach a consensus on the draft EOs due to differences on whether or not the government could afford to grant duty-free status and how to determine which inputs are not produced here or are in insufficient supply locally.

This time, Roxas said the Cabinet-level Tariff and Related Matters had endorsed the tariff cuts to the National Economic and Development Authority its list of products whose duties, ranging from 3 to 5 percent, would be lowered to one percent. He said the EO would be issued on March 15 when Congress goes into recess.

Roxas said the TRM decided to cut duties to only one percent to minimize the impact on government collections. Government estimates showed that it would forego P800 million in annual duty collections with a reduction to one percent compared with P1.2 billion for zero duty.

The tariff cut is expected to generate significant savings for domestic producers which they can use to offset the high cost of power, transport and labor—factors that are relatively more difficult to reduce than tariffs. Manufacturers have argued that duties on products not produced here or are in insufficient quantity do not protect any industry but merely adds to the burden of a majority of industries.

Among the products that were lobbied for tariff cuts were malt, hop cones, and vegetable saps and extracts for San Miguel Corp.; various chemicals endorsed by the Samahan sa Pilipinas ng Industriyang Kimika and Philippine Phosphate Fertilizer Corp.; coal briquettes for Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp.; raw materials for tires and automotive batteries, steel products, electronic goods, and textiles.

Credit Lyonnais unit buys 60% of Exchange Capital

By Doris C. Dumlao

HONG Kong-based CLSA Ltd., the investment banking arm of French banking giant Credit Lyonnais, has expanded its foothold in the Philippines with the acquisition of 60 percent of leading investment house Exchange Capital Corp.

"Our bank has allocated $2 billion for loan and structured finance for Asia, excluding Japan. The Philippines is one of the countries we're targeting with that product, which is aimed at Southeast Asia and China," visiting CLSA executive chair Gary Coull said in an interview with INQUIRER.

For the first time since the Asian currency crisis of 1997, Coull said there had been a slow resurgence of investor interest in Southeast Asia.

"We're investing at the bottom of the cycle and most of them are in Southeast Asia," Coull said.

Coull said CLSA's buy-in deal with ECC, formerly Jardine Fleming Exchange Capital Group Inc., of Filipino investment banker Luis Virata, was part of the group's bid to strengthen its presence in the region as well as in other emerging markets like India and China.

The new venture will be known as CLSA Exchange Capital Inc. The amount of the deal, however, is subject to a confidentiality clause.

Virata, for his part, noted that by aligning the two group's investment banking services, they would be able to offer comprehensive cross-border capital market and financial advisory services to the Philippine corporate sector.

To date, CLSA's presence in the Philippines is limited to brokerage operations at the Philippine Stock Exchange and equity research, which had remained steadfast despite the pullout of big foreign stock brokers last year.

"In order of priorities, I think Malaysia is the most attractive (market in Southeast Asia) at the moment, followed by Thailand, then Singapore, the Philippines and then Indonesia," he explained.

This year, he noted that CLSA had likewise upgraded its brokerage unit in Thailand, bought out a joint venture in Indonesia and applied for a domestic underwriting license in China.

With more than 700 employees in 29 countries, CLSA is considered as a leader in brokerage and investment banking services in the emerging markets of Asia, Latin America, emerging Europe, the Middle East and Africa. It is 65-percent owned by Credit Lyonnais, which bought into Hong Kong brokerage Winfull Laing & Cruickshank in 1987.

ECC, on the other hand, is a leading underwriter of equity and equity-linked securities in the Philippines, raising more than $2.5 billion for local companies since 1993.

Asked what investment banking opportunities were available in the Philippines in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis and the big merger and acquisitions (M&A) mania in the banking sector, Coull explained: "Looking at our own mandates, we see a fair bit of debt restructuring in telecoms, both in the cellular and fixed line. We also see some reorganization in the petroleum business, in the distribution business and a little bit in middle-grade technology and those sorts of service. We also see consolidation in non-banking financial services and possibly, resource financing."

He said investment banking opportunities in Southeast Asia were less competitive than in other parts of the region like South Korea and Taiwan, which tended to favor American investment houses because the deals were more oriented toward US listings and American depository receipts.

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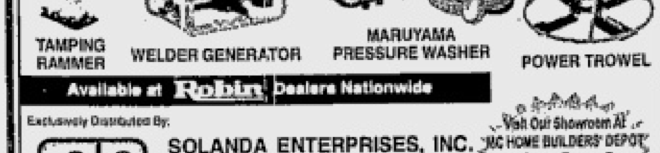
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Sun Life upbeat on RP economy

GLOBAL insurance firm Sun Life Financial said it expects brisk business in the Philippines in the Year of the Horse.

"It will be a lively and highly spirited year for all . . . a definite time for advancement," said Sun Life president Esther Tan.

Tan said she foresees a "sea of change" in the Philippine financial services landscape, with growth hinging on renewed business confidence and economic activity.

"And we believe that the restoration of market and business confidence in the Philippines will heighten this year," Tan said, citing as reason the country's 2001 economic performance.

Tan predicted heightened competition and consolidation in the life insurance industry, with rising demand for customized products and services, speed and convenience.

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MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

I AM delighted to be a columnist for the INQUIRER because it has been my paper of choice for many years. Over the coming months, I wish to share with you my 50 years experience in the stock market, mostly in London. I started in 1952 as a floor trader but I had too many flaws. After a year, I was transferred to the bond market, then to the stats department and eventually I started up research. Two years later, I joined the very large trustee department which handled hundreds of millions of pounds which was huge money in those days.

In 1970, I developed an interest in technical analysis and followed 625 stocks, updating them daily by hand, since there were no computers (we were still in the Dark Ages). I wrote a monthly booklet called Technical Analysis of Market Trends which was sent to stockbrokers worldwide. I also ran a mutual fund, and for the last six years I traded options. So I have had a long and varied career in the market and I have lived through 10 bull and bear cycles.

Probably my useful contribution on how to make money in good markets and keep it in bad markets can be found on the capitalonline.com website where you will see an oversized Mr. Bearbull icon. Clicking on it will give you a daily market summary and the hyperlink will take you to the 10 Commandments. These are short and to the point and I suggest that you print them out and study them, as it is guaranteed to change, forever, your investment strategy and turn you into a successful investor.

It is a sad fact that 90 percent the investing public loses money, lots of it, and it goes to the professionals who understand the market and regrettably sometimes manipulate it. At 72, I rarely trade, owing to my blood pressure, so you can rest assured that I do not manipulate stocks I recommend. In any event, I only follow stocks which are very liquid and my last strong BUYS were back in November when I told readers to buy ALI at P3.65, SMPH at P4.60 and my nap selection for 2002, FLI at P1.08. On average, these three blue chips have risen 100 percent, which is far better than the performance of the Phisix.

Prior to that, I had been telling investors as far back as July 1999, when the index was 2,556, to sell everything and take up golf. The following week, I told them to go on a long vacation to the United States or Europe, but get out of the market, which eventually fell to a 10-year low of 978. I have these articles in case anyone disbelieves me.

The first commandment is "Do no trade against the trend." At the time, this was highly relevant because we were half way through a five-year bear market which started on Jan. 9, 1997 when the Phisix was 3,447. Now, although the market is overbought and in a corrective phase, the outlook for the next two years up to the election, is positive and I see the index going much higher. This presupposes that there will not be another devastating terrorist attack on the United States or its allies. If GMA, or an equally competent president is chosen, the bull market could continue up to 2006 so this warning no longer applies and you have plenty of time to recoup your losses and turn them into profits.

Therefore, I will turn my attention to the second commandment, which is to "cut losses quickly but run profits" until the charts indicate that the stock is overbought and losing momentum. This is where technical analysis is so useful and I will tell you in a later article how you can update 30 charts a day in 10 minutes at a cost of P50. One of the problems facing research departments is that they can only give BUY recommendations. They cannot send out SELL signals because this would upset the company and sour their relationship. So you are never told when to sell and quite often this ends in disaster. This problem is worldwide and not confined to the Philippines.

Technical analysts, on the other hand, do not visit companies and rely solely on their interpretation of the chart patterns, so they are not beholden to anyone and are therefore unbiased. If you can afford to spend about P3,000, there is an excellent book called Market Wizards written by Jack Schwager, an American financial reporter. In this book, and also in a sequel, he interviews at great length, about 50 fund managers who have consistently outperformed the market over a long period. Only a few traded stocks, the majority traded currencies, commodities, index futures and other derivatives which tended to be highly leveraged. He tried to find the common denominator which made them successful.

He had a hard time because they came in all shapes and sizes. Some used fundamentals, some technical analysis, a few studied macroeconomics while others played hunches or read tarot cards. A percentage held degrees in financial subjects, others had little education but were street smart. Many were serious A types; others were drinkers, womanizers and loved to party. Quite a few looked after their bodies through diet, exercise and meditation; while the rest lived on cheeseburgers, French fries and Coca Cola, and were obese.

Even worse, 63 percent of their trades lost money yet they always finished up on the right side. What was their secret? They always cut their losses immediately, one tick of fluctuation and they were out. On the other hand, they ran their profits until they felt there was no more to be gained. At the end of the year, they had hundreds of tiny losses, a number of decent profits and a couple of flyers, or baggers as they call them, stocks or futures which showed profits of 100 percent or more. Result success.

What does the average investor do? He takes quick profits, most of which are eaten up by expenses, and he sits on his losers in the hope that they will recover. One speculator, who is now on anti-depressants, tranquilizers and sleeping pills, bought 1,000 BW at P104. He then averaged down every P10 fall so he bought another 1,000 shares at P94, P84, all the way down to P4. By this time, the man was possessed and his house repossessed. He was the proud owner of 10,000 shares at an average price of P54 plus expenses, say P550,000. At the current price of 62 centavos, his shares are worth about P6,000 and he has lost 99 percent of his capital, plus his wife and children. *(To be continued.)*

(If you have any questions about the market, email mrbearbul@hotmail.com)

Stocks

From page B1

boosted by the news on the better-than-expected growth performance of the United States in the fourth quarter of 2001.

Securities Specialist president Francisco Villaroman said he expected a short-lived rally this week because based on technical indicators, the market had yet to reach oversold levels.

Stock market portal 2tradeasia.com said that the market debates have shifted as to whether a US-led economic recovery could occur sooner than expected in the second quarter of this year as against the previous consensus of a second semester rebound.

"We believe the present low-interest rate environment will go a long mile in aiding improvements in consumer and capital spending—variables that comprise a large share within the global economy. This is probably one of the main reasons why much of the limelight has focused on utility and telecom-related stocks, aside from the traditional and sturdy consumer-industrial bets," 2tradeasia.com said.

Overall, 2tradesia.com said the market was expected to build firmer bases within 1,400-1,450, "given the absence of aggressing selling, and as players wait for convincing variables to pull the market from its present monotony."

However, it said it was prudent to wait for more time in property counters as technical indicators were becoming less favorable. Nevertheless, it said some of the preferred bets among the property issues were Ayala Land Inc. and Filinvest land Inc. at entry prices of P6.50 and P2.28-P2.30, respectively.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, March 01, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	11,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	68	68.5	68	68	98,500
China Banking Corp.	580	585	580	585	3,050
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	15	17	15	17	5,000
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	30	31	30	31	125,900
First E-Bank Corp.	1.94	1.98	1.94	1.98	30,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	210	212	208	212	29,940
Philippine National Bank	67	67	67	67	40,300
Security Bank Corp.	19	19	19	19	13,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	20.25	20.75	19.75	20	288,900
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.28	1.32	365,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1300	1300	1300	1300	430
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.8	0.84	0.8	0.84	20,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1035	1045	1035	1045	20,560
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31.5	32	31.5	32	27,400
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.69	0.69	0.65	0.67	8,320,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	790	800	790	795	36,990
Ipeople Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.065	0.065	76,200,000
Piltel	0.48	0.48	0.43	0.47	18,990,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	510	510	497.5	497.5	83,940
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.021	0.022	0.021	0.022	40,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	32.5	33.5	32.5	33.5	399,600
Manila Electric Co. B	48	50.5	47	50.5	1,546,600
Petron Corp.	1.9	1.92	1.88	1.92	3,918,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.91	0.92	0.91	0.92	260,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.12	1.14	1.12	1.14	569,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.7	2.75	2.6	2.65	6,320,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	100,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	1,010,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	360,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.58	1.6	1.58	1.6	170,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.65	0.66	0.65	0.65	640,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	9,700
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	42,100
RFM Corp.	1.48	1.48	1.42	1.46	1,129,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	40,000
San Miguel Corp. A	48	48.5	48	48	78,000
San Miguel Corp. B	63	64	63	64	693,600
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.7	3,110,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2	2	2	2	172,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.81	0.81	0.8	0.8	90,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	100,000
APC Group Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	10,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	300,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	50,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.84	0.85	0.81	0.83	17,270,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.32	0.32	500,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	740,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.115	0.12	6,120,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	20,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	330,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	33.5	33.5	33	33	739,900
Global Equities Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.17	60,000
House of Investments Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	670,000
Ionics Inc.	7.9	7.9	7.7	7.8	37,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.84	1.84	1,148,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.82	0.83	0.81	0.83	4,130,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.6	420,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	6,980,000
Music Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.31	6,060,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	300,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.84	0.85	140,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	680,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.28	1,330,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Cerro-Coat Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	10,000
Federal Chemicals Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	10,000
Pryce Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	83,700
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.49	0.51	5,830,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	60,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.4	0.41	590,000
Philippine Racing Club	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	1,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	32	32.5	32	32.5	48,400
Cosmos Bottling Corp.-Pref	10	10	10	10	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.62	1.64	1.58	1.64	32,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	795	800	795	795	1,500
Jollibee Warrants	12	12.25	12	12.25	8,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.5	10.25	10.5	7,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	400	400	400	400	250
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9	12,926,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	140,000
Cityland Development Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	37,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	270,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.29	3,790,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.52	0.54	0.51	0.54	12,940,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.31	5,730,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.28	2.32	2.28	2.3	3,150,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	10,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.41	0.41	3,410,000
Primex Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	16,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100,000
SM Development Corp.	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.1	5,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.9	1,765,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.08	0.08	0.0775	0.08	2,200,000
MINING					
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.039	0.04	0.039	0.039	30,500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	900,000
Omico Corp.	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	45,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	1,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	3,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	50,000
Pacifica	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	18,500,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	26,700,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	20,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,054,480	50,033,865.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	219,545,530	338,513,620.00
PRO	46,490,000	120,075,220.00
Mining	77,400,000	1,594,800.00
OIL	48,270,000	2,289,900.00
GRAND TOTALS:	392,760,010	512,507,405.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	565.07	UP 0.30
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,924.07	UP 4.96
PRO	626.66	UP 3.27
Mining	1,354.73	DOWN 1.55
OIL	2.00	UP 0.01
All Shares Index	746.46	UP 1.79
Composite	1,410.42	UP 4.20

NO. OF ADVANCES: 23; NO. OF DECLINES: 37; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 50;
NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 110; NO. OF TRADES: 3,029

CURRENCIES

March 1, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.150483	1.000000	51.2820
Japan	Yen	0.008610	0.007484	0.3838
United Kingdom	Pound	1.629890	1.416700	72.6512
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.147688	0.128370	6.5831
Switzerland	Franc	0.677872	0.589206	30.2157
Canada	Dollar	0.718828	0.624805	32.0413
Singapore	Dollar	0.628336	0.546150	28.0077
Australia	Dollar	0.594565	0.516796	26.5023
Bahrain	Dinar	3.051842	2.652661	136.0338
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.306796	0.266667	13.6752
Brunei	Dollar	0.625093	0.543331	27.8631
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000114	0.000099	0.0051
Thailand	Baht	0.026339	0.022894	1.1741
UAE	Dirham	0.313312	0.272331	13.9657
Korea	Won	0.000876	0.000761	0.0390
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.869200	44.5743
Brazil	Real	0.489567	0.425532	21.8221
Denmark	Kroner	0.134575	0.116973	5.9986
India	Rupee	0.023672	0.020576	1.0552
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.302759	0.109619	5.6215
Mexico	New Peso	0.126115	0.109619	5.6215
New Zealand	Dollar	0.484006	0.420698	21.5742
Norway	Kroner	0.129578	0.112629	5.7758
Pakistan	Rupee	0.019191	0.016681	0.8554
South Africa	Rand	0.100734	0.087558	4.4901
Sweden	Kroner	0.110274	0.09585	4.9154
Syria	Pound	0.026387	0.022936	1.1762
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032861	0.028563	1.4648
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.063916	0.055556	2.8490

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BUY/SELL COUNTRY CLUB SHARES
AS OF MARCH 1, 2002

		ASKED PRICE	BID PRICE
1.	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	-	1,500,000.00
2.	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,700,000.00	-
3.	CANLUBANG GOLF CLUB	750,000.00	550,000.00
4.	CAMP JOHN HAY	280,000.00	-
5.	CAPITOL HILLS GOLF CLUB	-	110,000.00
6.	CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	190,000.00	-
7.	COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY	-	380,000.00
8.	CLUB FILIPINO	220,000.00	-
9.	EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB	200,000.00	-
10.	FONTANA "A"	-	90,000.00
11.	FONTANA "C"	150,000.00	-
12.	FOREST HILLS GOLF CLUB "A"	-	200,000.00
13.	FOREST HILLS GOLF CLUB "B"	-	250,000.00
14.	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	300,000.00	250,000.00
15.	MANILA POLO CLUB	2,600,000.00	-
16.	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	-	700,000.00
17.	MIMOSA	-	130,000.00
18.	MT. MALARAYAT "B"	400,000.00	-
19.	MONTEMAR BEACH CLUB	30,000.00	-
20.	ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "C"	550,000.00	-
21.	PUERTO AZUL BEACH CLUB	110,000.00	-
22.	PHILIPPINE COLUMBIAN ASSOCIATION	80,000.00	-
23.	ROYALE TAGAYTAY	80,000.00	-
24.	ROCKWELL	550,000.00	-
25.	RIVIERA GOLF CLUB "A"	220,000.00	-
26.	RIVIERA GOLF CLUB "B"	250,000.00	-
27.	STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB	-	1,750,000.00
28.	SHERWOOD HILLS "C"	-	200,000.00
29.	TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L GOLF CLUB	-	900,000.00
30.	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS GOLF CLUB	-	730,000.00
31.	VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	170,000.00	-
32.	VALLEY GOLF CLUB	-	240,000.00
33.	VERDEMAR GOLF CLUB, INC. (CEBU)	Please call	-
34.	WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	7,500,000.00	6,500,000.00
35.	THE COUNTRY CLUB	4,000,000.00	-
36.	OTHERS	Please call	

PLAYING RIGHTS ALSO AVAILABLE

ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB	P 30,000.00	STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB	60,000.00
CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB	free-rental	TAGAYTAY GOLF CLUB	40,000.00
COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY	30,000.00	VALLEY GOLF CLUB	15,000.00
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB	20,000.00	WACK WACK GOLF CLUB	60,000.00
MANILA SOUTHWOODS	30,000.00	ORCHARD GOLF CLUB	20,000.00
		OTHERS	Please call

AMELIA B. MAGAT
Asst. Treas. / Comptroller

or call
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Partial List — CLUBS	03/01/2002 SELLING AT	Share Swapping: Please Call — CLUBS	BUYING AT
CALATAGAN GC "A"	90,000	ALABANG "A"	1,690,000
CANLUBANG GC	865,000	ALABANG "B"	1,700,000
CELEBRITY CLUB	200,000	BAGUIO CC	Call now
MAKATI SPORTS "A"	250,000	CAMP JOHN HAY	250,000
MANILA GOLF (INDIV)	Call now	CAPITOL HILLS	115,000
MANILA GOLF (CORP)	12,000,000	EAGLE RIDGE "A"	300,000
MANILA POLO CLUB	2,760,000	MANILA GOLF (INDIV)	10,000,000
PUERTO AZUL "A"	135,000	MANILA POLO	2,500,000
ORCHARD "A"/"B"	25M/35M	MOUNT MALARAYAT "A"	350,000
RIVIERA GCC "A"	Call now	ROCKWELL CLUB (INDIV)	390,000
SPLENDIDO	925,000	STA ELENA "A"	1,700,000
SUBIC BAY YACHT (INDIV)	200,000	SUBIC BAY YACHT (CORP)	Call now
THE COUNTRY CLUB	Call now	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	730,000
VALLEY GOLF	230,000	WACK-WACK GOLF	6,800,000

AVAILABLE LESSORS FOR PLAYING RIGHTS

ALABANG CC "A"	25,000	THE COUNTRY CLUB	Call now
CANLUBANG GC	35,000	STA ELENA "A"	65,000
CC AT TAGAYTAY	20,000	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	35,000
MANILA GOLF	400,000	WACK WACK	50,000

TERE TABUENA, LYRA, KARRENE, LEIZA, FRANCO DEL ROSARIO
809-8233 / 809-8263 / 850-5870-71 / 0918-9043308
E-mail: clubshar@evoserve.com / Fax: 809-8074

GG & A Club Shares
SEC License Broker #007575 * As of March 4, 2002

ggaclubshares.com

CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,650,000	1,800,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,650,000	2,000,000
Baguio Country Club	700,000	750,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	70,000	90,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	100,000
Camp John Hay	Please Call	280,000
Canlubang	500,000	600,000
Canyonwoods	Please Call	330,000
Capitol Hills	-	135,000
Cebu Country Club	1,800,000	2,000,000
Celebrity Sports Club	-	200,000
Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Eastridge "A"	Please Call	Please Call
Evercrest "A"	-	100,000
Forest Hills "A"	200,000	230,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	280,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	290,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	250,000	280,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	300,000	375,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	12,500,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,000,000	12,500,000
Manila Polo	2,600,000	2,750,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	600,000	650,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	600,000	700,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	150,000
Montemar (Individual)	-	30,000
Mt. Malarayat	-	Please Call
Orchard Golf Club "A"	200,000	250,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	250,000	300,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	310,000	500,000
Philippine Columbian	-	85,000
Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C"	-	Please Call
Puerto Azul	-	125,000
Quezon City Sports Club	200,000	230,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"	-	Please Call
Rockwell	Please Call	550,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	100,000	150,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,700,000	1,900,000
Sta. Elena "B"	2,000,000	Please Call
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	330,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	100,000
Tagaytay Country Club	390,000	-
Tagaytay Highlands	850,000	Please Call
Tagaytay Midlands	760,000	800,000
The Country Club	Please Call	Please Call
Valle Verde (Individual)	160,000	180,000
Valley Golf	220,000	240,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	5,800,000	Please Call

PLAYING RIGHTS

(Available Lessors)

Alabang "A"	25,000	Mimosa Golf	25,000
Calatagan "A"	10,000	Orchard "A"	30,000
Canlubang	60,000	Riviera "A"	15,000
Eagleridge	15,000	Sta. Elena	60,000
Eastridge "A"	20,000	Tagaytay CC	20,000
Forest Hills	30,000	Tagaytay Golf	45,000
Manila Southwoods	20,000	Tagaytay Mid.	35,000
Makati Sports "A"	25,000	Valley Golf	20,000
Manila Golf	300,000	Wack-Wack	90,000

For more information, please call:
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268 Kalentong Street, Mandaluyong City

SELLING:		BUYING:	
Alabang A	1.7M	Alabang A/B	1.650M/1.7M
Baguio Country Club	720,000	Calatagan A	60,000
Camp John Hay Golf	300,000	Camp John Hay Golf	280,000
Canlubang Golf	550,000	Canlubang Golf	550,000
Canyon Woods	200,000	Capitol Hills	125,000
Celebrity	170,000	Eagle Ridge B/C	350,000/400/550
Club Filipino	200,000	Forest Hills "A"/B/C	230/250/250
Eagle Ridge A/B/C	350,000/400/550	Manila Golf (Indiv)	10.0M
Forest Hills A/B/C	200/250/250	Manila Southwoods "A"/B	630/750
Manila Golf (Corp)	11.5M	Makati Sports "A"/B	250,000
Manila Southwoods "A"/B	600/750	Metropolitan A/B	100,000
Makati Sports A/B	280,000	Mt. Malarayat "A"/C	350/550
Mimosa Indiv. & Corp	Please call	Orchard A	210,000
Mt. Malarayat "A"/C	350/550	Puerto Azul	110,000
Orchard "A"/B/C	230/290/300	Quezon City Sports	200,000
Puerto Azul	125,000	Riviera A/B	190/250
Quezon City Sports	220,000	Rockwell	400,000
Riviera "A"/B/C	200/250/400	Royale Tagaytay	50,000
Royale Tagaytay	80,000	Sta. Elena A/B	1.750M/1.750M
Subic Yacht (Indiv)	180,000	Sherwood A/B	120,000
Tagaytay H'lands Club/Golf	390/850	Tagaytay H'land Club/Golf	390/850
Tagaytay Midlands Golf	800,000	Tagaytay Midlands Golf	750,000
Valle Verde CC/Corp	170/200	Valle Verde CC	150,000
Valley Golf	250,000	Valley Golf	226,000
Wack Wack	7.2M	Wack Wack	7.0M

Other shares & playing rights available
Tagaytay Highlands, Lot, Spa, Woodlands, Condo, Pinecrest, Bellview

Connie Ang
Trading Manager/Real Estate Broker
House: Corinthian P25M, Dasma, Acrop, G-Meadow, Valleygolf House 5000m2/35M, Ayala Alabang
Condo & Warehouse rentals: Corinthian Place
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Tels: (24 Hours)
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GOLFERS CLUB SHARES, INC.
SEC LICENSE # A 1998-2129
AS OF MARCH 1, 2002

		SELLING	BUYING
1.	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,700,000	1,600,000
2.	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"		1,700,000
3.	BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	725,000	700,000
4.	CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	100,000	60,000
5.	CAMP JOHN HAY	300,000	250,000
6.	CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	600,000	
7.	CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	125,000	115,000
8.	CELEBRITY CLUB	210,000	180,000
9.	COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	380,000	370,000
10.	CLUB FILIPINO	210,000	
11.	EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	200,000	
12.	EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	350,000	340,000
13.	EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	100,000	
14.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	220,000	
15.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	260,000	
16.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	500,000	
17.	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	260,000	250,000
18.	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	400,000	
19.	MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.)	11,000,000	
20.	MANILA POLO CLUB	2,800,000	2,600,000
21.	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	650,000	600,000
22.	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	750,000	
23.	METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	140,000	
24.	METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	150,000	
25.	MT. MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	400,000	330,000
26.	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	220,000	200,000
27.	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	300,000	260,000
28.	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	370,000	
29.	QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	220,000	200,000
30.	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	200,000	
31.	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	260,000	230,000
32.	STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	1,700,000	1,500,000
33.	SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND)	250,000	
34.	TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L GOLF CLUB		800,000
35.	TAGAYTAY MIDLAND		700,000
36.	VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	170,000	
37.	VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	240,000	200,000
38.	WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		6,500,000

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Remy's replacement

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

REMEDIOS Macalincag is due to retire on March 8 as president/CEO of the Development Bank of the Philippines.

Macalincag turned 65, the mandatory retirement age, in January, but Malacañang had to extend her term pending the confirmation of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, under whose supervision the DBP and other government financial institutions fall.

Unless an outsider is chosen, and there are a number of outside contenders, the strong betting within the state bank is that Armando Samia, currently first senior vice president/merchant banking, would likely be named to succeed Ms Remy.

Samia's advantage? He had worked at Bankers' Trust under Camacho.

But more than the Camacho connection, Samia, according to the grapevine, is respected by the DBP officer corps for having stood up against then DBP chair, Erap-appointed Ramon Abad, over a certain loan accommodation.

Instead of giving in to Abad, Samia chose to go on leave.

Samia's handicap is that he is relatively new in DBP, having been brought in by then DBP chair Francisco del Rosario Jr. during the Ramos years, which would mean he would bypass a number of more senior DBP officers should he win the appointment.

A P9.7-M everyday car

INTENT on dethroning Mercedes-Benz as the European luxury car of choice among the locals, BMW last week formally launched the new 745i, the techno-laden, V-8 "sporty" saloon whose introductory price is, cough, cough, P9.7 million plus-plus.

Two 745i, one black and one silver, were displayed in PGA Cars on Edsa during Thursday's launch; each BMW dealer, like Prestige Cars and Wheels, would also have two 745i in each showroom, just in case Mr. Big Spender suddenly pops in and asks for his favorite Toy.

Among the more public names who attended the PGA launch was Benpres chair Oscar Lopez, a confirmed BMW fan, who even brought his wife to appreciate the new Bimmer. Presidential adviser on agriculture and jobs creation Luis Lorenzo Jr. even tried the driver's seat for size.

The car is so laden with technological gizmos—its computerized iDrive box has a total of 270 functions and sub-functions—that it would be a danger to entrust such a treasure to a hired driver without the help going through at least two-whole-day familiarization drive.

Among its luxury offerings are electric rear and side window curtains, ventilated and massaging buttery-soft leather seats, head rests that adjusts automatically as the seats are moved, solar-sensing air-conditioner, park distance control visual display in addition to the now common audible warning feature, push-button car trunk hood, air bags all around (including knee-air bag for driver), push-button parking brake that automatically disengages as the car moves again, and 8-speed setting active cruise control.

BMW was so confident of the car's agile road handling that it even showed during the launch a televised toe-to-toe comparison of the 745i against rivals Mercedes-Benz S430L and Lexus LS430.

The local distributor of Benz has yet to bring in the S430L, also a 2002 model like the 745i, but from the published specs, the Merc only has 275 bhp as against 745i's 333 bhp. Lexus, on the other hand, has no authorized local distributor.

Incidentally, if anyone is prepared to spend such a fortune for everyday transport, it would make better sense to wait and spend a few hundred thousands more for the long-wheel version of the 745i.

Due out in Europe by the third quarter, the longer wheelbase 745i offers limo-like rear passenger seat space and wider doors for easier entry and exit.

Seoul skydive

TRUE to his competitive juices, taipan John Gokongwei dove down the Manila-Seoul-Manila fare to mark the inaugural flight of Cebu Pacific to South Korea Friday.

Cebu Pacific's allied travel agents offered $270-round trip, economy fare ticket to Seoul, as against Philippine Airlines' $405 and Korean Air's and Asiana's $400. The Cebu Pacific offer is valid for the entire March.

According to a Cebu Pacific source, Friday's inaugural flight, a 179-seater Boeing 757, carried 99-paying passengers plus two infants to Seoul. The return leg carried 38 passengers.

(Whoops, contrary to what was reported here Friday, Mr. John obtained an MBA degree, not the undergraduate BS Commerce, from De La Salle.)

Heard through the grapevine

THE cutthroat car industry has been perked up by the news that Manila Electric Co. has this year decided to reopen its executive car plan again. Under the plan, more than 600 executives and supervisors are entitled to each avail themselves of a brand-new car.

The offer does not extend to Meralco's sister company, ABS-CBN. *(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

Ayala group outlines major reorganization

By Doris C. Dumlao

AYALA Corp. has announced a new reorganization strategy to streamline its size and improve the value of businesses outside of core units Bank of the Philippine Islands, Globe Telecom and Ayala Land Inc.

Ayala president and CEO Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala said in a briefing on Friday that the company had created a new unit—AC Capital—to continue aggressive business-building efforts even if some people were now saying that the era of conglomerates were over.

But he said this strategy required the reorganization of Ayala into a more sharply focused enterprise that should become leaner over the next few months. The statement also said the conglomerate would be able to "reduce its staffing complement considerably."

"In the future, the main reason why investors will be interested in investing in Ayala Corp. rather than just the subsidiaries, will be the business-building capability, the faith that Ayala Corp. can build the next Globe, if you like," he said.

In line with the reorganization, he said Ayala was realigning its business interests to create value above and beyond main subsidiaries BPI, Globe and ALI. He said the holding company would be rationalized to eliminate duplication among subsidiaries and decentralize more aggressively particularly for businesses that were already well established.

He also said Ayala would be prepared to trade businesses where it was no longer the "natural owner" or which do not meet its performance criteria.

In addition to its three flagship subsidiaries, Ayala is rationalizing its offshore investments through Ayala International Holdings while Ayala Capital would be tasked to manage the conglomerate's all other businesses as a portfolio outside of BPI, Globe, ALI and Ayala International.

"AC Capital is probably the largest single change we will be making to Ayala Corp.," Zobel de Ayala said.

He said AC Capital would be charged with finding new and creative ways for Ayala to create more value from each of its non-core businesses, including finding new strategic investors.

"AC Capital will be the vehicle which will drive Ayala's new business building efforts. AC Capital will therefore have two additional functions. One will be a capability to constantly search and assess new business opportunities, particularly opportunities that leverage our unique portfolio of capabilities," Ayala explained.

He said the conglomerate continued to see some opportunities in the Philippines in certain structurally attractive industries where Ayala could achieve a leadership position.

He added that Ayala was actively looking at businesses that would help the group balance its exposure to the Philippines with that of other geographies.

"We are not intending to embark on a large, unrelated overseas expansion program. We are, however, investigating a range of opportunities that leverage our skills in industries that offer non-peso revenues and the prospect of global or regional competitiveness, such as remote services," he explained.

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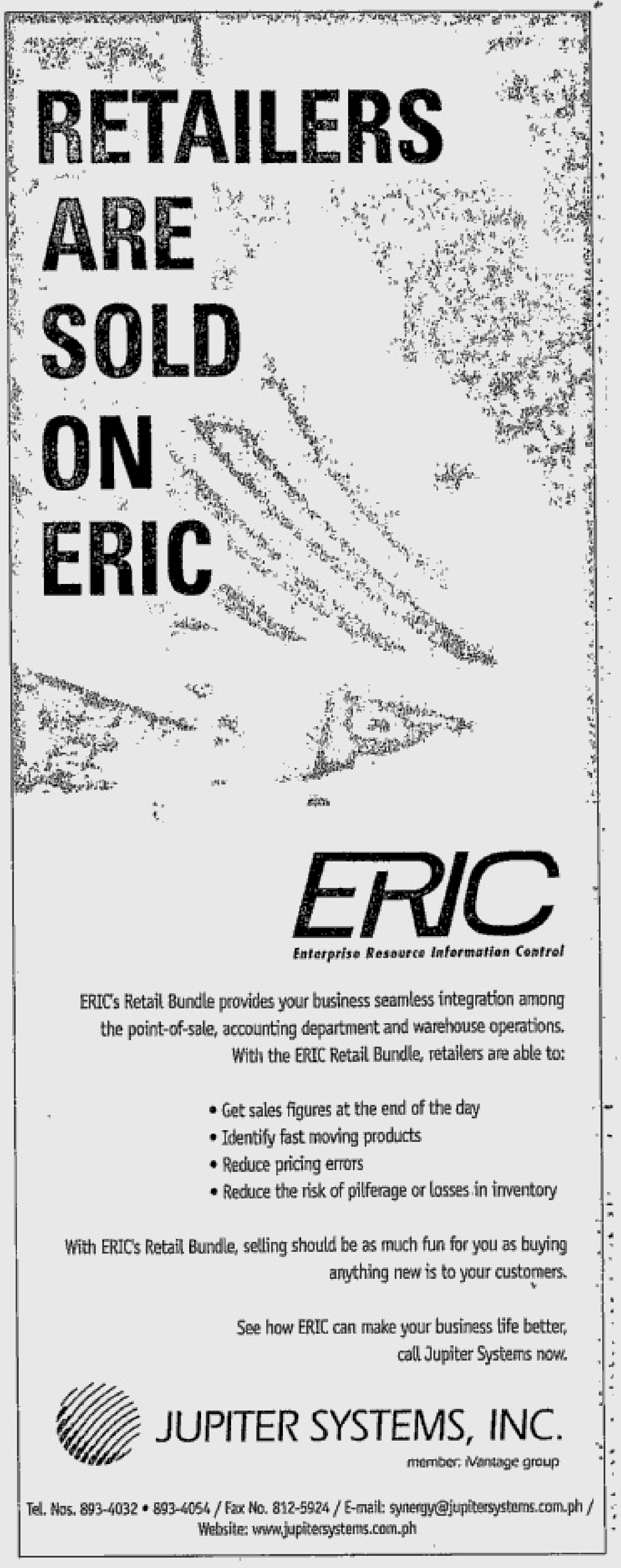

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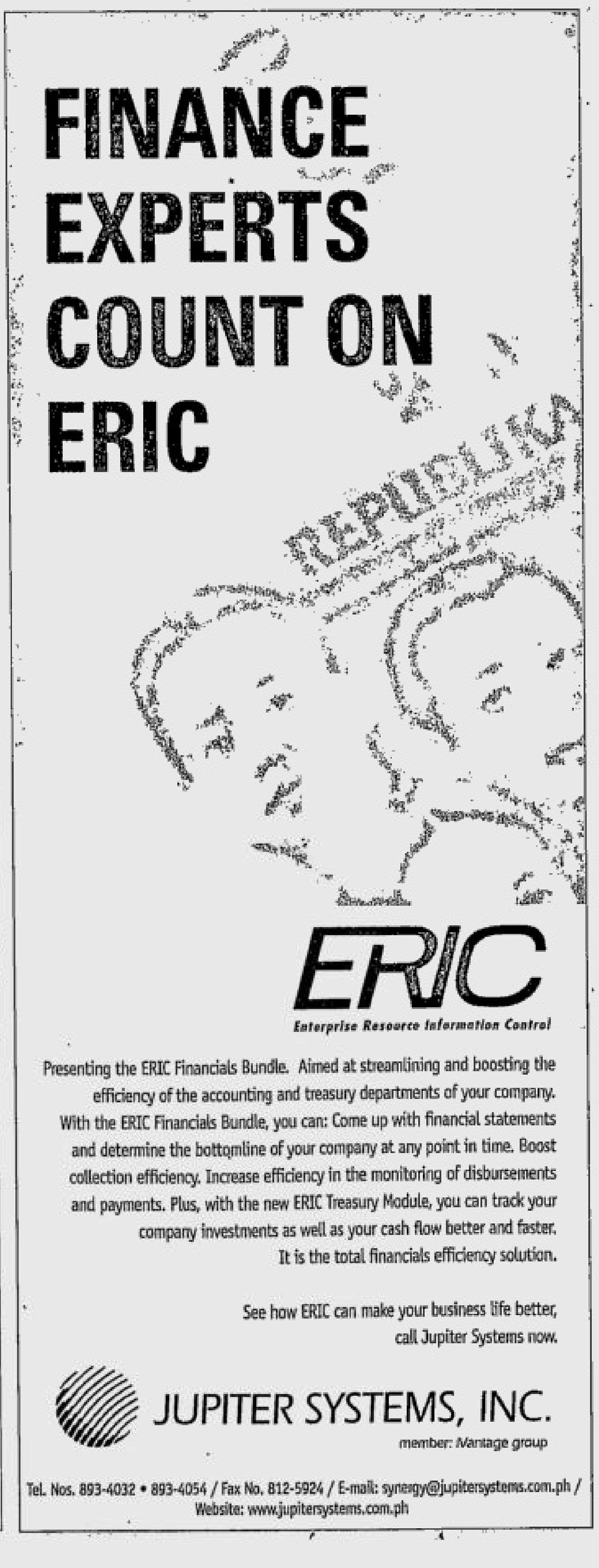

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Higher sales cut Napocor's net loss in 2001 to ₱10.4 B

By Ronnel W. Domingo

HIGHER electricity sales trimmed the state-owned National Power Corp.'s net loss last year to P10.4 billion, 20 percent less than the previous year's P13 billion.

Napocor attributed the better-than-expected financial performance to brisk sales, as big power users such as industrial and manufacturing companies start to recover and increase output.

Napocor's net loss last year was 36.2 percent lower than the projected P16.3 billion set at the start of the year.

Net revenue went up to P115.7 billion last year, about 16 percent up from P100.1 billion in 2000.

The power firm sold 40,304 gigawatthours of electricity in 2001, 8 percent higher than the year-ago figure of 37,320 gwh.

The Visayas grid posted the strongest growth in demand at 12.1 percent, followed by Luzon with 8.5 percent. No figures were given for Mindanao.

Sales from the regular and the one-day power sales programs registered increases of 6.4 percent and 56.9 percent, respectively.

Regular sales accounted for 38,119 gwh while sales from the ODPS program reached 2,185 Gwh.

Napocor said, however, that the implementation of the 30-centavo mandatory rate reduction after the approval of the power reform law last year reduced the profits by P1.7 billion.

Napocor officer in charge Roland S. Quilala said that the improved financial performance was timely as the firm was in the crucial phase of restructuring in preparation for its eventual privatization.

"We have been implementing programs meant to streamline our processes and cut costs," Quilala said. "We want to be as competitive as we could."

In a related matter, data from the energy department showed that the Napocor has about $800 million in obligations maturing this year.

Mining production rose to ₱31B in 2001

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE PHILIPPINE mining sector's overall production value last year rose to an estimated P31 billion due mainly to the higher production by the precious metals sector.

Preliminary data from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau showed that the production increased from P30.2 billion in 2000 due to higher output of Lepanto Consolidated Mining Corp.'s Victoria copper flotation plant and Philex Gold Inc.'s Bulawan project.

The data also showed that the earnings of mining firms grew by 7.7 percent to P7.82 billion last year, mainly due to increased production of precious and base metals such as gold, silver and refractory chromite.

Gold production increased by 14.1 percent last year due to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' purchases from small-scale mining operations, higher outputs from the copper flotation plant of Lepanto's Victoria mining project and the 63-percent increase in the output of the Bulawan project of Philex Gold mines.

Although Philex Gold has shut down its Bulawan gold project in late October, it was still able to produce a substantial amount of gold, the MGB said.

For the chromite sector, production value rose by 148.4-percent growth from P20.37 million to P50 million, which was attributed to the resumption of operations of Benguet Corp.'s Masinloc Chromite mines.

The copper sector, on the other hand, remained depressed due to the poor performance of the Maricalum, Manila Mining Corp. and Philex Mining Corp.'s copper mines. Only Lepanto's Victoria project operated for six months last year.

Where to, Pag-IBIG?

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

FIRST, I got an e-mail letter screaming that Congress was just about to create the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Pag-IBIG was to be attached to DHUD and all employees were to apply for reemployment.

A few days later, Pag-IBIG president Manuel Crisostomo was sacked, mainly because he did not want Pag-IBIG to be attached to the DHUD.

So last week, I scurried over to the Bills and Index Divisions of the House and the Senate. At the House, there were eight bills that proposed to create the new department. In four of the bills, the authors wanted to attach Pag-IBIG to the DHUD.

At the Senate, there were four bills; only one proposed to attach Pag-IBIG to the DHUD. None of the 12 bills required Pag-IBIG staff to apply for reemployment.

The bills are in their respective committees. After public hearings, the committees will reconcile the bills into one. Then, when the House and the Senate approve their own versions, a bicameral committee would be formed to iron out the kinks in the two semi-final bills.

The final bill would then be sent to Malacañang for the President's signature. This process shows that the creation of the new department is months, if not years, away.

Still, one question that has to be answered is; should Pag-IBIG be attached to the new department? The national government is so organized that agencies that raise money like the Bureaus of Internal Revenue and Customs, SSS, GSIS and Pag-IBIG are under the Department of Finance. To attach Pag-IBIG to the DHUD would break this standing policy.

But beyond the squabble over whether Pag-IBIG should to be attached to the DHUD, there are a couple of basic issues on mass housing that should be thoroughly reviewed.

First, housing finance. The mass housing program has been almost totally financed by SSS, GSIS and Pag-IBIG. Loans have been granted at 9 percent, way below market rates. Since most of the members are minimum-wage workers, a spectacle was created where the poor subsidized the poor. It is poetic justice that over 30 percent of the buyers never paid beyond their down payments.

At SSS, this is the main reason why pensions are 65-percent below minimum wage.

The viability of the three agencies is guaranteed by the national government. But when the arrears reached horrendous proportions, a law was enacted condoning penalties under certain conditions. Here was the guarantor condoning the penalties that it guaranteed.

The fact remains that mass housing is a high-risk low-earning investment. This is why banks and insurance companies do not invest in mass housing. Government should take away the risk but its sovereign guarantee seems worthless.

The second issue is that the housing law is heavily biased in favor of the developer. To encourage developers, materials and services used in low-cost housing is free from the value added tax, land donated as sites are exempt from donor's tax, and—listen to this—income is not subject to income tax.

These tax savings are supposed to be passed on to the poor buyer. Instead, developers make a huge killing. I know of a case where the developer doubled his money in 18 months. Under a 9-percent loan, a Pag-IBIG member doubles his money in about eight years.

Creating the Department of Housing and Urban Development may be an idea whose time has come. But a Ph.D. probably wrote Senator Pangilinan's bill. (As my friend Caesar Agnir puts it, *puro hangin dala.*)

It is studded with high-sounding phrases like spatial integration, locational choices of investors, diseconomies of scale and environmental degradation. In fact, all the 12 bills are extremely long on strategy but very short on tactics.

Unless our lawmakers and government administrators take better care of the millions of GSIS, SSS and Pag-IBIG members who do not take out housing loans instead of the hundreds of thousands who do, these agencies will run out of money sooner or later.

If this happens, Pag-IBIG, the smallest of the three, will be the first to go.

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MRT builder wants gov't to buy Edsa rail project

By Abigail L. Ho

METRO Rail Transit Corp., the consortium that built the Edsa MRT-3, wants out of the venture and is negotiating an asset sale with the Department of Transportation and Communications, an INQUIRER source said on Friday.

The source said that the asset transfer could fetch around $350 million to $400 million if finalized between July and December this year.

This, however, would transfer to the government the burden of paying the consortium's $678 million in loans.

"MRTC has talked to the government to buy them out. When this happens, taxpayers would end up shouldering their debts for the next 20 years," the source added.

Another indication of the impending bailout of the group from its 25-year build-lease-transfer (BLT) agreement with the government was the retrenchment that the group is currently undertaking.

The first retrenchment was done more than a year and a half ago, removing half of the original workforce employed in 1995, the source explained.

About 50 other employees were laid off, following the first retrenchment. With the latest happening right now, MRTC would be left with less than 10 percent of the original hires since 1995 up to the first retrenchment.

The INQUIRER source said the latest retrenchment would not be done only at the rank-and-file level, but on the executive level as well.

While it trims down its employee base, citing lack of funds as a reason, MRTC would be cashing out on a $170-million asset-backed securitization deal set to be finalized on March 5.

The ABS will be under Germany's Hypovereinsbank. It will convert future revenue streams into liquid funds that the consortium can use now.

In an earlier interview, MRTC spokesperson Paul Daza said proceeds of the ABS would be used to finance the Edsa MRT-3 extension project that would extend the existing railway from North Avenue to Monumento.

The INQUIRER source, however, said the funds would be used mainly to pay off some of the consortium members' maturing debts, with less than 10 percent of the $170 million for the railway extension project.

"Some of the consortium members want out of the project. They have huge debts related to certain projects that turned out not as profitable as they thought. They started to lose so they decided to securitize," the source said.

The MRTC consortium is composed of Fil-Estate Management, Ayala Land Inc., Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp., Greenfield Development Corp., Ramcar Inc., Allante Realty and Development Inc. and DBH Inc.

Of these shareholders, ALI and Greenfield chose not to participate in the ABS.

If the deal pushes through on March 5, the $170-million cash advance would likely be used to pay off some of the consortium members' maturing obligations, specially those of Fil-Estate and Ramcar.

"Securitization has nothing to do with the MRT-3 project. I don't think there would be enough left after (the other consortium members) use the money for other things," the source said.

Gov't urged to honor John Hay lease accord

THE GOVERNMENT, through the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA), has been urged to uphold the terms of a memorandum of agreement it entered into in July 2000 with Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDC).

"In the interest of fair play and consistency, the BCDA should honor its earlier agreement with us," said CJHDC Chair Robert Sobrepeña, referring to the MOA signed with the BCDA that provided for the restructuring of his company's P850 million in unpaid dues during the first two years of its lease contract to develop the former US military installation in Baguio.

Continued delays in the implementation of the MOA, for which CJHDC already paid a P50-million advance, have been "grossly disadvantageous" to the company as well as to the local government of Baguio, Sobrepeña added.

He cited the inability of the government to deliver on certain terms of the 25-year lease agreement with the BCDA in 1996 to transform John Hay into a tourism complex, multiple-use watershed and human resource development center.

The failure of the government to meet particular terms, Sobrepeña said, led to lower revenues and sales for CJHDC.

This included the government's failure to deliver the entire 250-hectare property as stipulated in the lease contract due to overlapping problems, as well as its failure to demolish certain structures. There have likewise been delays in the issuance of clearances and permits to the company.

"These things have certainly altered our operational timetable as well as income projections," Sobrepeña said.

He pointed out that despite this, CJHDC has managed to live up to its investment commitments to John Hay as it has already poured in P2.6 billion for the development of the facility.

The latest structure to be completed was the Manor Hotel, a world-class lodging facility that is expected to draw tourists to Baguio and provide income opportunities for residents. Construction of a commercial complex is also ongoing with plans to build a 3,000-seat convention center and a 250-room hotel that would cost P1 billion also in the works.

Based on the MOA, CJDH will make P150 million in advance payments for its P425-million rental in 1999 with the remaining P200 million to be paid in five yearly installments starting 2003 and P75 million in the form of club shares and condominium units. For its 2000 dues, CJDHC agreed to pay P150 million in cash and the balance to be paid in five annual payments starting in 2004.

"We feel that the long delayed implementation of the MOA should be placed in its proper perspective as soon as possible. Not doing so may serve as a disincentive to private sector participation in similar development projects," Sobrepeña said.

RP-Romania deal on railways eyed

THE MACAPAGAL administration is studying the possibility of forging an alliance with Romania for the rehabilitation and upgrading of the Philippine National Railways and the construction of a Mindanao railway system.

In an interview last week, Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez said this was President Macapagal-Arroyo's idea which she discussed with Romanian President Ion Iliescu during his state visit here two weeks ago.

"The railway project was brought forward by the President. In case there is an area of cooperation between the two countries, it would be in railways and energy," he said.

He added that inter-embassy discussions were already taking place and that details of a possible agreement were already being threshed out.

"We're coordinating with their embassy here for possible initial negotiations between the two governments," he said.

Alvarez said Romania may come in as a partner in terms of giving the country reasonable prices for materials that would be used in constructing or upgrading the country's railway systems.

Romania is known for its metal products and equipment, specially for railway systems. These include trains and other materials for railways, he added.

These materials could be used for the expansion of the PNR lines, which would be done in two sections of two phases each. The first section, the North Line, would span Manila to Pangasinan. Phase one would be from Manila to Clark and the second phase would be from Clark to Pangasinan.

The South Line, on the other hand, would cover Manila to Sorsogon. Phase one would be from Manila to Calamba to Batangas and the second phase would start in Batangas going to Bicol.

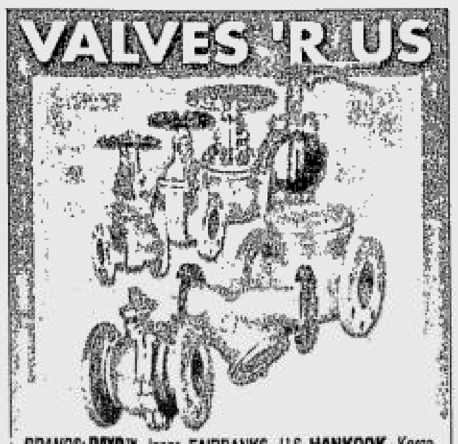
Before 2004, the project should already be in its initial stages of implementation.

The Mindanao railway system, on the other hand, would be divided between the Department of Transportation and Communications and the Bases Conversion Development Authority.

Its South Line would be under the PNR, while its North Line would be under the BCDA.

"This would already go beyond our budget in the DOTC, so we're letting the BCDA handle half of it," Alvarez explained.

He added that the project would be offered to the private sector on a build-operate-transfer scheme. As of now, the government has not received any proposal for the project.



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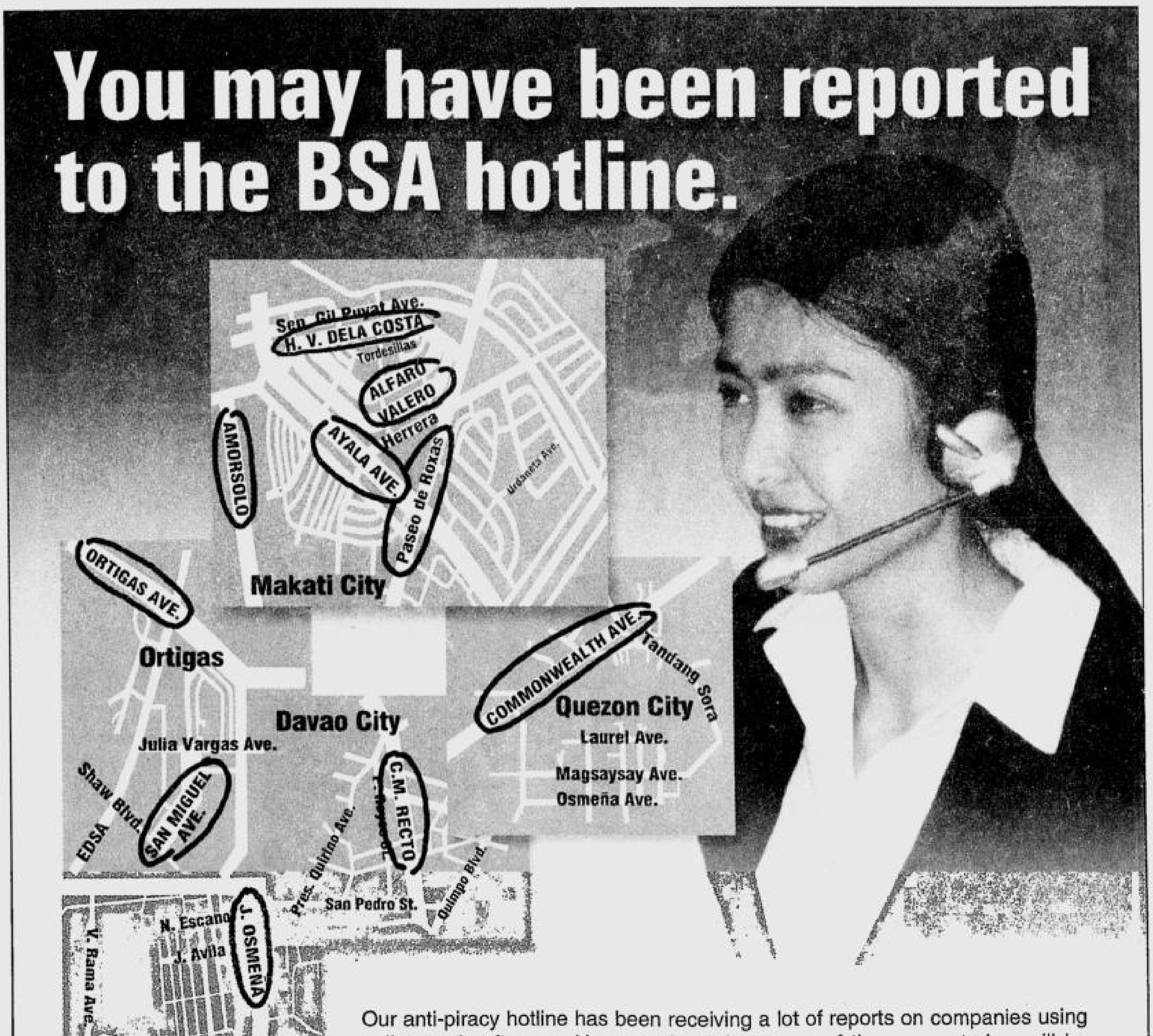

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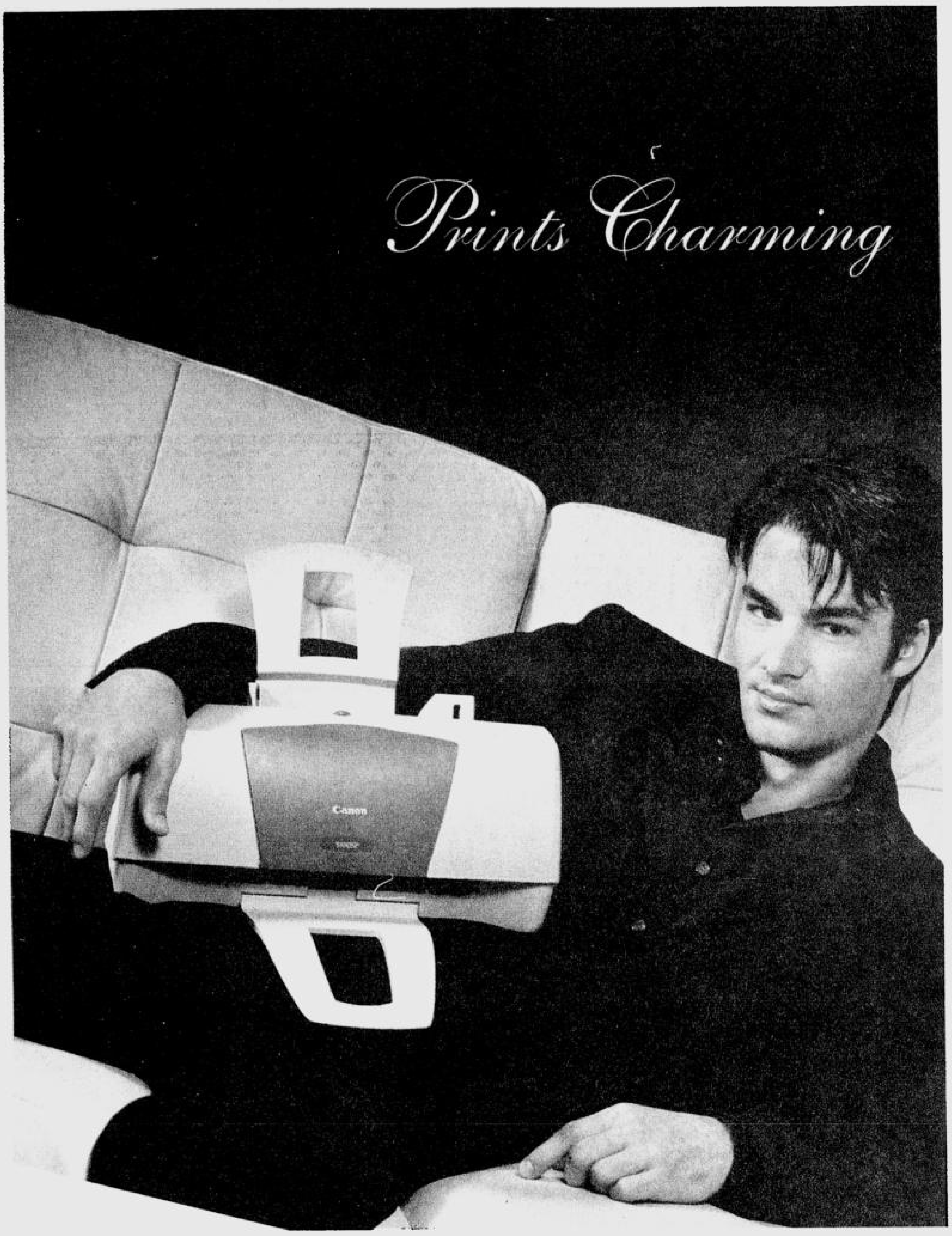

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Savings hit ₱7B –Edeza

THE BUREAU of Treasury has saved some P7 billion from lower debt servicing in the first two months of the year as a result of a huge drop in the rates of government securities, particularly the 91-day treasury bill.

In a news briefing, National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said this amount already matched the government's 12-month savings from interest payments last year.

Edeza said the government has been striving to tame the fiscal sector, and it has so far been successful.

He said that as proof of its success, the Macapagal administration was able to nearly keep its budget deficit below its target of P145 billion.

The government set aside some P181.601 billion last year to pay its debts but spent only P174.834 billion, leading to P6.767 in interest-related savings.

The government has assumed that interest rates will be at 10 percent to 11 percent this year, Edeza said. So far, however, the rates have ranged from 7 percent to 8 percent.

"Rates were significantly down starting this year, but we are also feeling the positive impact of the decline in rates starting late last year," he said.

Yields on the benchmark 91-day T-bill rate have fallen to 7 percent, a new 15-year low, during last Monday's auction.

At the start of the year, the rate of the three-month debt note stood at 8.297 percent.

Edeza said he expected T-bill yields to move sideways in today's auction, with a slight chance of declining. *Clarissa S. Batino*

Solon seeks safety nets to check entry of cheap imports

THE GOVERNMENT may have over-complied with its world trade commitments by liberalizing the country's key industries ahead of its neighbors and, in the process, creating an "economic and political monster," according to San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora.

Zamora expressed apprehensions that the Philippines was trimming tariffs "too fast, too soon" as a member of the World Trade Organization.

"We have now become a magnet to a flood of imports that local industries and the jobs they create are at great risk," he said.

Zamora warned that without safety nets to guard against cheap imports, industries would collapse and thousands of workers would lose their jobs.

"Too much liberalization is just as bad, if not worse, than too much protectionism. We have to know how and when to stop a monster that we have allowed into our midst," he said.

Zamora said the fallout from industrial collapse would be such that poverty and its resulting problems were bound to worsen. He cited the cement and tile industries as examples of distressed industries threatened with extinction.

Landbank, RBAP form partnership

RURAL bankers have agreed, in principle, to make Land Bank of the Philippines their "apex" bank.

This move will allow the 782 member-banks of the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines to tap Landbank for financial leverage, liquidity assistance and other financial intermediary functions.

Rural banks can now coordinate some of their functions with Landbank, including liquidity assistance, correspondent banking and availability of term loan facilities.

Landbank and the RBAP have created a task force to determine what other banking services may be made available to rural banks.

"We are offering them a shared ATM network, auditing services, universal accounting system, universal loan packaging system and a loan syndication," Landbank vice president for strategic planning Julio Climaco said in an interview.

Climaco said the banking partnership between Landbank and the RBAP would be fully operational in six years.

"We are currently prioritizing three of the main services that rural banks would mostly need and they could select from what we are offering," he said. *Christine A. Gaylican*

A Special Feature of INQUIRER Golf *Monthly* MARCH 2002 Issue

Blind Shot

Eyes on the ball? Brain tumor survivor Rosalind Wee proves will power is better

ROGER MARGALLO

KATSUYAMA Kikai Ltd. has appointed Vonotec Inc. as exclusive distributor of its "Gondola" machines, a building maintenance equipment used to clean high-rise structures. Vonotec president Becky Garcia (third from left) and vice president Henri Muzzarelli are shown here welcoming Katsuyama owners Goro and Koji Kimura.

Gov't seeks better outlook

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT said Friday it would reopen talks for an improved sovereign credit rating should New York-based ratings firm Standard & Poor's lift its 16-month negative outlook for the Philippines.

"We will take advantage of the S&P visit to convince them that we have achieved significant progress that may merit an upgrade in the outlook for the Philippines," Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho told reporters.

S&P is sending an inspection team that will be here for four days starting today.

"A stable outlook will give us a basis to ask for an upgrade in the rating, especially if we can demonstrate that the gains we have achieved so far are sustainable," Camacho said.

The government is hoping for an improved outlook from S&P to lower interest and other charges on its borrowings and encourage investors to place their money in the Philippines.

S&P rates Philippine credit a notch below investment grade at BB+.

Last month, Moody's Investors Service, another rating firm perceived to be even more conservative than S&P, upgraded its credit outlook for the Philippines to stable from negative, citing President Macapagal-Arroyo's efforts to put the country on track to fiscal soundness and sustainable growth.

Government officials were delighted with the unexpected decision of Moody's, especially after the New York-based rating firm indicated in December that it was likely to maintain a negative outlook for the Philippines.

In particular, Moody's cited the reversal in the downward trend in the performance of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, which played a key role in containing last year's budget deficit very close to the targeted level of P145 billion.

Manila overshot the ceiling by P2 billion, but the rating agency said the target was "fairly ambitious for the new administration in view of the debilitating fiscal legacy it inherited and the poor external environment it has faced."

Moody's said the government was capable of reducing further the national government budget deficit in 2002 to the targeted level of 3.3 percent of gross domestic product "if its administrative reform efforts are intensified and economic growth remains relatively decent."

The government is targeting a GDP growth of 4 percent to 4.5 percent this year compared to last year's better-than-expected 3.4-percent expansion. The budget deficit target for the year is P130 billion.

S&P's team is set to meet with Camacho, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura, Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II, National Treasurer Sergio Edeza, BIR Commissioner Rene Banez, presidential adviser Luis Lorenzo and World Bank country director Robert Vance Pulley.

SEC clears Belle unit's plan to sell 20% of its equity

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has approved the application of Highlands Prime Leisure Properties Inc., a spin-off of Belle Corp., to sell about 20 percent of its equity through an initial public offering.

Documents from the SEC show that Highlands Prime will sell about 93.9 million primary shares out of about 2.2 billion shares at P2.13 each to raise some P200 million for its capital expenditures.

Some 355.35 million secondary shares will also be sold to the public, allowing Belle, Highlands Prime's parent firm, to raise P741 million that it plans to use to trim its debts.

As part of the offering, Belle will conclude the sale of 1.19 billion shares—a majority stake—to the group of retail tycoon Henry Sy through SM Investments Corp.

Highlands Prime has asked the Philippine Stock Exchange to approve its plan to list its shares on the second board of the bourse.

The offering of primary and secondary shares will be underwritten by BDO Capital & Investment Corp., which will also act as issue manager.

Highlands Prime, with the financial muscle of the Sy-led investors group, was created by Belle to continue the development of the Tagaytay Highlands leisure estate over the next 50 years. The company has an authorized capital stock of P4 billion.

Belle spun off over 600 hectares of core property assets consisting of subdivision lots and unsold condominium units in Tagaytay Highlands International Golf Club Inc. and Tagaytay Midlands Golf Club Inc. to create Highlands Prime.

Doris C. Dumlao

Gokongwei group spending ₱13.5B for GSM project

By Abigail L. Ho

JG SUMMIT Holdings Inc., flagship company of the Gokongwei family, is spending about P13.5 billion to roll out its mobile phone service, Digitel GSM, set to be fully operational by late this year.

In an interview last week, JG Summit president and chief operating officer Lance Gokongwei said this business was his group's "most important project."

Discussions with a number of potential investors were still ongoing, he said, although he declined to disclose the names of these groups.

He also declined to divulge whether these were corporations or funding institutions but said JG Summit was looking for partners that could provide both industry expertise and financial support.

"We're constantly in dialog with various groups but nothing that we can disclose. From any partner, we're looking for industry expertise and financial (capability). On the financial side, the group has sufficient funds to support nationwide rollout," he said.

Napocor increases financing needs from $1B to $1.5B

THE NATIONAL Power Corp. has increased by half its foreign financing requirement this year to $1.5 billion, giving the national government the added burden of raising more to cover for its own needs as well as those of its cash-hungry electricity producer.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said last week that Napocor decided to increase its external financing requirement after taking stock of its maturing debts and the capital it had to spend before it could start privatizing its assets later this year.

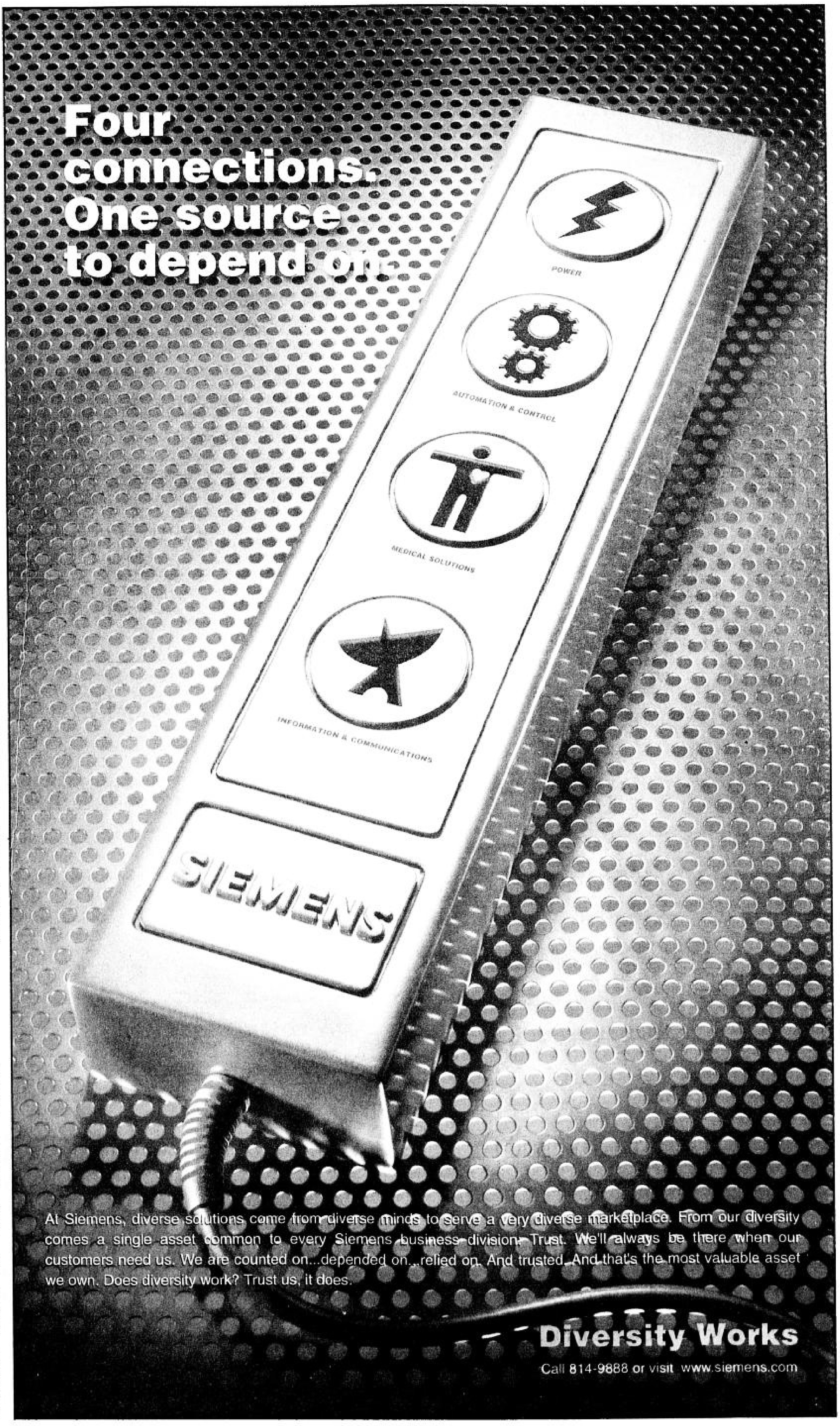
"They need about $900 million to pay their maturing debts, and they realized that they need extra cash for capital," another government official confirmed.

Napocor has so far raised only $250 million after riding piggyback on the government's $750-million, 15-year global bond issue in January.

Napocor suspended a planned $400-million to $500-million, seven-year bond issue set for early February after investors sought a return that would be almost a percentage point higher than the national government's borrowing.

The power firm still needs to raise some $1.25 billion, but a higher return being required by investors for its borrowing puts the additional burden on the national government, which also needs to complete a $1.5-billion external financing for this year.

Clarissa S. Batino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Republic of the Philippines

UNIVERSITY OF RIZAL SYSTEM

Province of Rizal

The Board of Regents of the University of Rizal System (URS) hereby announces that the Search for URS Presidency is now OPEN.

Minimum Qualifications:

1. Filipino Citizen;
2. Holder of an earned doctoral degree;
3. Preferably not more than 60 years old at the time of application;
4. Must have at least five (5) years of relevant managerial and administrative experience; and
5. Must be morally upright.

In addition the applicants are required to make full disclosure of all administrative, criminal and civil cases through the following clearances:

1. Ombudsman
2. Civil Service Commission
3. National Bureau of Investigation

Interested applicants and/or those nominated for the position are requested to send five (5) sets of formal application composed of:

1. Detailed Curriculum Vitaé and certified supporting documents;
2. The applicant's proposed Vision, Mission and Thrusts of the University;
3. Neuro-Psychiatric Exam (to be accomplished by the physician duly designated by the Search Committee for President); and
4. Medical Certificate (by Government Physician duly designated by the Search Committee for President)

not later than **April 3, 2002** to Honorable Commissioner MANUEL D. PUNZAL, Chair, URS Search Committee.

c/o DR. HERNANDO R. GOMEZ
Commission on Higher Education
DAP Building, San Miguel Avenue
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Telefax No. (02) 636-1693

Republic of the Philippines

CAMARINES SUR STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

San Jose, Pili, Camarines Sur
Telefax No. 477-3341

NOTICE OF SEARCH & CALL FOR APPLICATION

The Board of Trustees formally and publicly announces that the Search for the Presidency of Camarines Sur State Agricultural College is now OPEN.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Must be a natural-born Filipino citizen
- Must have an earned doctorate degree
- Must not be more than 61 years of age upon appointment
- Must have at least five (5) years of relevant managerial and administrative experience
- Must be morally upright

Interested applicants or those nominated for the position are requested to submit five (5) sets of the formal application composed of the following:

- Detailed Curriculum Vitaé and certified supporting documents
- Vision and Mission of the College
- Neuro-Psychiatric exam
- Medical certificate
- NBI, Ombudsman, Civil Service Commission, police clearances and disclosure of all administrative, criminal and civil cases

Applications are requested to be submitted on or before **3 April 2002** to:

Rev. Benoni Hernandez
Office of Commissioner Carlito S. Puno
5/F DAP Building, San Miguel Avenue
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

or

Mr. Gilberto Aguilar
Board Secretary
Camarines Sur State Agricultural College
San Jose, Pili, Camarines Sur

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Meralco Avenue, Pasig City

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

School Year 2002 - 2003

Position : **Teacher I (SG-10 - P119,268.00 p.a.)**

Qualifications

Education : **For Elementary School** - Bachelor of Elementary Education (BSEEd) or Bachelor's degree plus 18 professional education units

For Secondary School - Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSE) or Bachelor's degree plus 18 professional education units with appropriate major

Eligibility : LET/PBET/Teacher/RA1080 and PRC Registered

Requirements

Applicants are requested to submit their Personal Data Sheets (C.S. Form 212) with supporting documents to the school Principals in their preferred school of assignment.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
METROSTAR EXPRESS

INVITATION TO BID

The DOTC-MRT 3 Bids and Awards Committee invites all interested bidders/suppliers to prequalify and bid for the supply, delivery and installation for the **FURNISHINGS FOR THE MRT 3 CONFERENCE ROOM** Projects with a total approved budget amounting to Php 905,047.00.

Accreditation requirements can be obtained upon payment of non-refundable fee of P100.00 to the Administrative Division, DOTC-MRT 3 Depot, North Avenue cor. EDSA, North Triangle Area, Quezon City. Submission of duly accomplished and notarized pre-qualification documents shall not be later than 5:00 p.m., 15th March 2002. Accredited/ pre-qualified bidders/suppliers need not apply.

Bid documents and complete specifications are available for issuance upon payment of P500.00, which is not refundable, and upon presentation of Notice of Invitation and Certificate of Accreditation.

The DOTC-MRT 3 reserves the right to reject any or all of the bids proposals without offering any reason, waive any informality therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government. This office, likewise, assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids nor does it guarantee that an award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **MARIO C. MIRANDA**
Acting General Manager
Metrostar Express, and
Chairman, PBAC

(PDI - March 4, 5 & 10, 2002)

Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation
Responding Through Responsible Gaming

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION AND TO BID

ITB NO. 02-05-2002

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) is currently looking at implementing an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Software to support its current operations across the country. This ERP project is aimed at increasing the efficiency in **financials, logistics** and **human resource** processes at all levels of the organization. In this regard, PAGCOR is inviting all Authorized and Exclusive Distributors/Dealers/Remarketeers to prequalify in its forthcoming bidding for the supply, customization and support of the ERP Software based on the following eligibility specifications:

(1) **ERP Software**
- 1.1 Should be able to run under UNIX Operating System
- 1.2 Oracle Database
- 1.3 Browser-based
- 1.4 Should belong to the Top 5 ERP Products internationally and should have at least 40 reference sites locally

(2) **Vendor**
- 2.1 Vendor should have a local office in the country whereby immediate maintenance and support concerning the software can be readily made available.
- 2.2 Vendor should be able to ensure that PAGCOR will enjoy regular updates of the software as part of the ongoing software maintenance.
- 2.3 Should implementation services be wholly or partially done by other "partners", the vendor should indicate the partners' role or scope of work.
- 2.4 Vendor should be able to arrange a site visit, walkthroughs, and interviews if deemed necessary by PAGCOR, etc. to one of its existing clients.
- 2.5 Vendor should be able to provide PAGCOR a one (1) year warranty period on the software.

Suppliers should primarily comply with PAGCOR's Accreditation requirements in order to participate in the pre-qualification proceedings. The Application Form for Accreditation is available at the **SUPPLIERS ACCREDITATION & EVALUATION DIVISION (SAED), PROCUREMENT & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT (PPD), 2nd Floor, PAGCOR House, 1330 Roxas Boulevard, Ermita, Manila.**

For Pre-qualification, send a letter of intent addressed to **MR. GERWYN P. SEE, Suppliers Accreditation & Evaluation Officer.** All Accreditation and Pre-qualification documents should be submitted before **5:00 p.m. of Friday, March 15, 2002.** Failure to comply with the requirements will render outright disqualification. Inquiries may be coursed through the **SUPPLIERS ACCREDITATION & EVALUATION DIVISION, Tel. No. 526-0573, Fax No. 523-2045.**

Interested suppliers must pick up **"Instructions for Prospective Bidders to Prequalify" documents (2 sheets) from MR. JOSE YCAY, Project Officer, at the FOREIGN PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS ADMINISTRATION UNIT, PPD.**

All pre-qualified prospective bidders shall be invited to attend a **PRE-BID CONFERENCE**, the schedule of which shall be relayed through telephone and/or formal letters.

ACCEPTANCE and **OPENING OF BIDS** shall be announced during the Pre-bid Conference.

PAGCOR reserves the right to disqualify any prospective bidder if found that they have submitted falsified documents and/or information, and the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, to waive any defects or formalities found therein and to accept such bid or a part thereof as may be deemed most advantageous to PAGCOR, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Please address all communications to the undersigned.

(Sgd.) **CARMENCITA A. ESPINOSA**
Chairman
Bids & Awards Committee (BAC) "B"

(PDI - Mar. 3, 4 & 5, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF REVISION OF RATE SCHEDULE TO COMPLY WITH REPUBLIC ACT NO 9136 WITH PRAYER FOR PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

ERC CASES NOS. 2001-651

IBAAN ELECTRIC AND ENGINEERING CORPORATION (IEEC),
Applicant

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

Notice is hereby given of the filing by applicant Ibaan Electric and Engineering Corporation (IEEC) on December 28, 2001 of an application for approval of revision of rate schedule to comply with Republic Act No. 9136 with prayer for provisional authority docketed as ERC Case No. 2001-651. The applicant's proposed restructuring and/or reformatting of [illegible] structure in accordance with the prescribed Uniform Filing Requirements will result in an increase in its existing rates by [illegible].

The Commission has set the application for hearing on April 16, 2002 at nine o'clock (9:00 AM) in the morning and two o'clock (2:30 PM) in the afternoon at the ERC Hearing Room, 15th Floor Pacific Center Building, San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

All interested parties who may wish to comment on or oppose the said application should file their comments and/or oppositions on or before the date of hearing. Such parties who may wish to have the details of the application and who shall have manifested to the Commission their desire and intention to participate actively in the proceedings, may request, but before the date of hearing, they be furnished with copies of the application by the applicant, which is hereby directed to furnish the parties making such request with copies of the application and its attachments. Likewise, any such interested party may examine the application and other pertinent records filed with the Commission during the usual office hours.

WITNESS, the Honorable **FE B. BARIN**, Chairman, and the Honorables **MARY ANNE B. COLAYCO, OLIVER B. BUTALID, CARLOS R. ALINDADA** and **LETICIA V. IBAY**, Commissioners, Energy Regulatory Commission, this 7th day of February, 2002 at Pasig City.

(Sgd) **FRUCTUOSO C. LAGUNZAD, JR.**
Officer-in-Charge
Office of the Chief Executive Officer

(PDI - Feb. 28 & March 4, 2002)

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PNOC EXPLORATION CORPORATION
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Tel. Nos. 840-2024 or 893-6001 Loc. 1120
Fax No. (632) 840-1459
E-mail addresses: rbasallo@pnoc-ec.com.ph or ecengg@pnoc-ec.com.ph

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC) invites all Allison authorized maintenance suppliers and/or contractors to submit sealed bids for the supply, delivery, installation, testing and commissioning of:

REPLACEMENT ALLISON 501 KB5 GAS TURBINE ENGINE
PR NO. HN 223 103

Bid documents shall be available for issuance starting **March 12, 2002.**

Bidders are required to submit a complete set of the following pre-qualification documents on or before **March 26, 2002:**

1. Company profile or brochures showing related projects completed;
2. Annual Reports with audited financial statements for the past two (2) years;
3. List of clients and bank references;
4. Certification that the bidder is a bonafide service contractor/supplier, obtained from respective embassies or consular or trade office in the Philippines or Philippine Embassies in the country of origin;
5. Certification that the bidder is an Allison authorized maintenance center and/or supplier until **December 31, 2002.**

For purposes of clarification, a pre-bidding conference will be conducted on **April 16, 2002, 2:00 p.m., Manila time, at Building I, Conference Room** of the above stated address.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the amount stipulated in the tender documents in the form acceptable to **PNOC EC.** Sealed technical and financial bids in two (2) sets shall be received by the **PNOC EC** Purchasing not later than **April 30, 2002, 2:00 p.m. Manila time**, at the above stated address. Late bids shall not be accepted. Public opening of the technical bids shall follow thereafter. Participating bidders shall be formally advised of the schedule of the financial bid opening. Only the bids of the technically complying bidders shall be opened.

PNOC EC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any formality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to **PNOC EC.**

(Sgd.) **RUFINO B. BOMASANG**
President & CEO

(PDI – Mar. 4, 2002)

PNOC - Energy Development Corporation
Energy Center, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, M.M.
Telephone No. 893-1320 loc. 5115 Fax No. 840-1461

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION/ELIGIBILITY AND BIDDING

The PNOC - Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites Contractors classified by and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as IAC MEDIUM A in Electrical Works or General Building - Building and Industrial Plants to apply for pre-qualification/eligibility and if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the project:

SUPPLY, DELIVERY, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF THE NEGROS ORIENTAL RURAL ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT
Stage 4 (20 Barangays),
under Bid/Project No. EDC 02-030

The work calls for the supply of minor materials, labor, supervision, equipment, tools, consumables, and other services necessary to provide electric power supply to the 20 Barangays situated in the Towns of **AYUNGON, BINDOY, LA LIBERTAD, MABINAY AND TAYASAN, NEGROS ORIENTAL.**

The pre-qualification/eligibility forms may be secured from the Contracts Administration Group (c/o Nas M. Corcuera) starting **February 26, 2002**, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday upon payment of a non refundable fee of One Hundred Pesos (Php100.00).

The pre-qualification/eligibility documents must be submitted to the Contracts Administration Group not later than 5:00 p.m. of **March 12, 2002.**

Bid documents shall be issued to eligible Contractors starting **March 20, 2002** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00).

For purposes of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **April 4, 2002**, 9:00 a.m. at the La Planta Hotel, Bais City. Site inspection to follow thereafter.

Sealed bids in three (3) sets shall be received by the Contracts Administration Group at the above address not later than 2:00 p.m. of **April 18, 2002** then to be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

(Sgd.) **ESTER R. GUERZON**
Manager, Operations
Services Division

(PDI - March 4, 2002)

MAKE A CAREER CHOICE ONLINE.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue
Pasig City, Philippines

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

IFB Number : 2000-02-SEMP-DepEd-BEFP
February 28, 2002
Project Title : Social Expenditure Management Project (SEMP)
Loan No. 4535-PH
Contract Title : Bidding for the Construction/Rehabilitation of School Buildings for Public Elementary and High Schools Nationwide

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) to provide a budget support facility towards the financing of the Social Expenditure Management Project (SEMP) in various currencies. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this facility will be applied to eligible payments under the contracts for the Basic Education Facilities Program to be implemented by the Department of Education, DepEd.
2. The Department of Education (DepEd) now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the bidding of the construction/rehabilitation of the school buildings for the following: Cluster A - Manila, Muntinlupa City, Las Piñas City, Taguig (PhP15.6 Million) Cluster B - Quezon City (PhP19.1 Million) Cluster C - Tarlac City, Bataan (PhP10.5 Million).
3. For the purpose of this bid, eligible bidders must have the experience in works of equivalent nature and complexity over the last five years.
4. Interested eligible bidders may acquire the complete set of bidding documents (excluding blueprinting of plans) starting March 6, 2002. Upon submission of a letter of intent to the Bid Awards Committee (BAC) c/o Au Mendoza at DepEd Central Office, ULTRA Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Tel. No. 635-3762, and payment of a non-refundable fee of: PhP 1,500.00. The form of payment will either be in cash or by cashier's/manager's check.
5. The provisions in the Instruction to Bidders and in the General Conditions of the Contract are provisions of the World Bank Standard Bidding Documents: Procurement of Works.
6. Bids shall be valid for a period of ninety-days (90) after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a bid security of three (3%) percent of total bid price in the form of a bank guarantee; cashier's/manager's check or irrevocable letter of credit.
7. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidder's representative who chose to attend on April 02, 2002, 1000hrs. at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.
8. Prior to bid opening, a pre-bid conference will be held on March 19, 2002, 1400hrs. Bulwagan ng Karunungan, DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.
9. The Department of Education reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive informality therein and to award the package to one or more bidders.

(Sgd.) **ERNESTO S. PANGAN**
Undersecretary and Chair, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)
DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City

(PDI - March 3, 4 & 5, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
City of Parañaque

INVITATION TO BID

The City Government of Parañaque is inviting interested parties/accredited suppliers to participate and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

SPORTS SUPPLIES

All sealed bids will be received by the Committee on Awards on or before 10:00 a.m. and then publicly opened at the City Conference Room at exactly 2:00 p.m. on **March 22, 2002.**

Interested parties/accredited suppliers may secure the necessary bid documents and information from the General Services Office.

The City Government of Parañaque reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality or defect contained therein and accept the lowest complying and reasonable bid that is most advantageous to the City Government.

(Sgd.) **JOEY P. MARQUEZ**
City Mayor

(PDI - March 4, 2002)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OBITUARIES

"... Dearly Missed and Remembered."

One Year Ago Today

REBECCA GASKELL SAYCON

co-founder of BETHESDA Springs of Hope Healing Ministry

We wish to thank our dear friends and relatives,
Those who condoled and expressed their love and sympathy
*To our dear **Becky Saycon's** passing away.*

I, together with our children **Jay, Paolo, Pepeton, Franco, Aya, Carmina** and **Samantha, Mommy Letty Saycon** and children **Felicitas, Ningning, Lydia, Sonny Boy; Mommy Luding Gaskell** and children **Guia, George, Ike** and **Gabby**; request for your continued prayers as she now joins our FATHER and MAKER, in heaven.

Masses will be offered at the following churches for the repose of her soul.

St. James the Great Parish, Ayala Alabang at 6:00 p.m.
San Nicholas de Tolentino Parish, Congressional Subd., Quezon City at 6:30 a.m.
Our Lady of Annunciation Parish, Mindanao Ave. Ext. Tandang Sora at 7:00 p.m.
St. Jerome Emiliani & St. Susana Parish, Ayala Alabang at 6:00 p.m.
Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon City at 12:15 p.m.
St. Antoninus Parish, New Jersey at 12:00 noon

"We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us, along with you, to God."

(2 Cor. 4:14)

ENG. RAUL R. SANTA CRUZ

Peacefully joined our Lord on March 1, 2002 at the age of 57.

His loving wife **Estrellita (Nene)**; children **Roel Peter** & **Marie**; **Pinky** & **Rey Saavedra, Ranell**; grandchildren **Nikkie** and **Miggy**; brothers and sisters, mother-in-law **Ester Tabin**; brother-in-law and sister-in-law, relatives and dear friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at San Lorenzo Ruiz Chapel of the Holy Trinity Memorial, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Cremation will be on Thursday, March 7, 2002 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City after the 1:30 p.m. Funeral Mass at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels.

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811-4370

KALAW
528-0213; 527-3342

MEGAMALL
635-0219; 635-0220

PAULA PEREZ PUNSALAN

Of San Luis, Pampanga

Peacefully joined her Creator
on March 3, 2002 at the age of 89.

Her bereaved children **CEZAR (BOY) & PATRIA**, daughter-in-law **JESUSA**; grandchildren **JOANNE, CHRISTOPHER, PAOLO, MARY ANN** and **ROBERT PATRICK**; nephews, nieces and relatives request everyone to pray for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her remains lie in state at Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon Avenue.

Interment will be on Wednesday, March 6, 2002 at Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park, Tandang Sora, Quezon City after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

> Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it so much as dawned on man what God has prepared for those who love Him.
>
> *I Corinthians 2:9*

ATTY. EZEQUIEL CONSULTA

Peacefully joined our Creator on 2 March 2002
at the age of 77.

His beloved wife **GLORIA**; children **GABBY & TENH, NARDY & LEA, LULU & HARRY, CHARITO, RICKY & SHARI, ALBERT & MAITA, CELIA & SANDRELL**; grandchildren, relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie at Our Lady of Sta. Maria della Strada Parish at Katipunan Road, Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, 6 March 2002, 9:30 a.m. at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Della Strada Church.

People, Events & Products

aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Aries Espinosa, Editor

Changing the way women live, do laundry

IN A BID to take women empowerment a step further, Ariel has launched the "Tulong sa Pagsulong" livelihood program that will give Filipino women the opportunity to empower and better support themselves on a sustainable basis. For the next six months, Ariel will set aside part of its sales to fund the construction and initial stocking of sari-sari stores that will be given away to qualified women.

Ariel's "Tulong sa Pagsulong" program is being undertaken with the full support of woman legislator Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste. "One of the biggest obstacles to Philippine progress is not enough having employment and livelihood opportunities. The 'Tulong sa Pagsulong' campaign is Ariel's way of helping address this need through women empowerment," Legarda-Leviste said.

Under the "Tulong sa Pagsulong" program, sari-sari stores will be awarded to deserving Filipinas from February to May 2002. This will include the physical structure of the store, signage, and initial inventory of products.

Ariel's "Tulong sa Pagsulong" stores are seen as a big step for the Filipina towards further improving the quality of life for herself and for her family. These stores are expected to help women contribute to the family income and ensure a brighter future for the family.

The "Tulong sa Pagsulong" program is open to all Filipino women, 21-40 years of age who have completed high school, has space to put up a sari-sari store and the ability to maintain it.

To participate, aspiring women entrepreneurs must complete an official application form and drop this, together with six empty Ariel sachets or one empty Ariel bag, in drop boxes located in major supermarkets and public markets nationwide. Applications may also be mailed to 515 Katarungan Street, Mandaluyong City.

Every month, from February to May, 60 finalists will be drawn from all the applicants who passed the initial screening. An Ariel panel will interview and select the finalists that qualify for the final monthly draw, where 20 winners will be selected.

Ariel has changed the way Filipino women do their laundry by eliminating the need for burdensome scrubbing. With Ariel, women now have better control of their time and energy, resources they can spend on more productive and healthier tasks such as taking care of the family members and helping make a better living for the entire family.

The "Tulong sa Pagsulong" Livelihood Program is Ariel's way of furthering its mission of promoting true women empowerment throughout the country. It is also Ariel's way of saluting Filipinas who aspire to be progressive and want to help build a nation of progress.

MCDONALD'S WINS PANA AWARD

McDonald's Philippines receives the overall Values Award for 2001 from the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (Pana) for its 'Lolo' television commercial. Shown (front row, from left) is Jojo Samson, McDonald's communication manager, with Pana president Gigi Rodriguez, McDonald's top executives Leila Hernandez and Joseph S. Lau, McDonald's talents 'Karen' and 'Lolo', and Pana officers Jones Campos and Gina Virtusio. Back row shows (from left) Agapito Alcantara, Fortunato Babasa, Jesusa Achacoso-Cruz, Cergen D. Go, Dr. Ceferino 'Nonie' Azarcon, Raul Alvarez and Hemisphere Leo Burnett executive creative director Richard Irvine and group creative director Edsel Tolentino.

CITIBANK CELEBRATES 100 YEARS IN RP

Citibank, the country's largest foreign bank, recently held a special luncheon to mark its centennial in the Philippines and the Asia-Pacific. The occasion also served as a venue for the launch of Citibank's new logo, which is reflective of the company's status as the world's leading financial services brand. Shown are (from left) Citigroup private bank's country manager Richard Smith, Citibank country corporate officer Catherine Weir, Citibank Asia Pacific group head for consumer bank Frits Seegers, and Citibank country business manager Nina Aguas during the ceremonial toast at the grand celebration.

JWT's Joy ad joins best in London

"SA BUKID walang papel..." found pasture in London when the Joy Pop-Up Tissue commercial was chosen finalist in the London International Advertising Awards. The competition received thousands of entries from all over the world.

Before the awards, "Bukid" scored very high in consumer tests and gained popularity to help achieve dramatic sales for Kimberly Clark's portable bathroom paper. The commercial was created by J. Walter Thompson Manila through Shu Manalo, Joel Limchoc, Carlo Estagle, DJ Vizconde, Maika Zialcita, creative team; Kiran Vaswani, Margie Villa-Abrille, strategic planning; Angel Antonio, Manette Razon, client service. It was directed by Vitt Romero for Production Village.

JWT Manila ended 2001 with seven Ad of the Month winners from the Creative Guild, the association of the advertising industry's creative directors.

AdBoard inducts officers tonight

THE ADVERTISING Board of the Philippines (AdBoard) inducts its 2002 board of directors tonight at the Maynila Room of The Manila Hotel. The AdBoard is an umbrella organization composed of nine member associations engaged in the practice of advertising.

Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo is the keynote speaker and inducting officer for this year's induction which starts at 7 p.m.

Susan L. Dimacali of the 4As (Association of Accredited Advertising Agencies) will serve her second term as chairperson of the AdBoard, while Cerge M. Remonde of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) is vice chair.

The other officers of the AdBoard to be inducted will be Philippine Association of National Advertiser's (Pana) Carminia "Gigi" B. Rodriguez (treasurer); Jose Y. Sy (corporate secretary), and Alvin R. Manacsa (public relations and information officer).

This year's AdBoard directors will be Pana's Susie Achacoso-Cruz, Agapito G. Alcantara, Jr. and Raul S. Alvarez, 4As' Antonio S. Ventosa, Jacinto Puno, IBA's Enrique A. Velez, Mores' Carol Ann S. Sarthou, OAAP's Michael R. Mallari, KBP's Roberto S. Nicdao, Jr., Asap's Khalil O. Khodr, Jr., UPMG's Paciencia M. Pineda, Lucien C. Dy-Tioco, and 4A's Angelito C. Pangilinan.

BITS & Clips

PGMNHS centennial day

THE PEDRO Guevara Memorial National High School (formerly Laguna High School and PGMHS), Santa Cruz, Laguna, will celebrate its 100th Foundation Day on March 8 with the theme "LHS-PGMHS-PGMNHS: Coping with the Challenges of the New Millennium". The week-long affair will include cultural shows, concerts, a jobs' fair, free medical and dental mission, legal assistance, the coronation of Mr. and Ms. Centennial winners and the grand alumni homecoming. For inquiries, call Dr. Enrique F. Coralejo, president of the centennial celebration, at (02)920-8369; Eulalia G. Mesina, overall coordinator, at (049)808-2406; or Gliceria K. Cristobal, public relations officer, at (049)808-1428. To avail of a publication contract for the centennial souvenir program, text or call Noel S. Surbano at telefax (049)808-1924/0919-4543700.

BPI PROGRAM WINS GOLD QUILL

The Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) recently won the Gold Quill Philippines Award of Excellence in Multi-Audience Communication for 'A Tradition of Leadership: BPI's 150th Anniversary Program.' Shown (from left) are BPI senior executive vice president and BPI Family Bank president Aurelio Montinola III and BPI senior vice president Caridad Ibarra accepting the award from Gold Quill chair Gretchen Recto and Gold Quill judge Penny Poole. The Gold Quill Philippines Awards recognizes the best communications programs in the country. The Awards is given by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). Other BPI awards were the Award of Excellence in Special Project Design for 'The BPI 150th Anniversary Signet,' Award of Merit in Electronic and Interactive Communication for the 'CD-ROM Re-Issue: The Philippine Islands 1498-1898' and Award of Excellence in Publications for 'Diario del Banco de la Islas Filipinas.'

Germany's fave choco spreads

NOW, Filipinos can enjoy Germany's favorite chocolate spread for over a century: Winsenia's Winnie milk chocolate stripes, Nussenia Hazelnut/choco spread and the Suger-Free Hazelnut/choco spread. There will be free sampling at all SM Supermarkets in Metro Manila and in Pampanga today and tomorrow, March 5. Winsenia's quality products are exclusively imported and distributed locally by SweetLink Inc.

EBM in ambulatory pediatrics confab

THE PHILIPPINE Ambulatory Pediatric Association seventh annual convention, dubbed "EBM in Ambulatory Pediatrics", will be held on March 5 and 6 at the Century Park in Manila. For inquiries, call Michael M. Resureccion, MD at 924-6601 to 25 local 281), or Cecilia O. Gan, MD at 0917-3738403.

Energy issues in Aspac forum

LEADING Asian and US experts on economics, politics, and security will gather at a forum in Manila to discuss the changing global and regional environment. The 2nd Asia Pacific Executive Forum, to be held on from March 5 to 7, is a business strategy forum hosted by the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) and Honolulu-based think-tank East-West Center. The forum, themed "Opportunities and Challenges: Business Strategies in a Changing Economic Environment", boasts of a lineup of speakers who are-experts of economies of countries in the region led by Washington SyCip, Ambassador Rodolfo Severino, and Charles Morrison, president of the East-West Center. For more information, call Kara Dilag or Cristina Mendoza at 751-9182 or 751-9183, or visit the conference website at www.EastWestCenter.org/sem-bp.asp.

PIM FOR THE OLD, POOR, AND SICK

In line with its mission to help disadvantaged sectors of Philippine society, the Tan Yan Kee Foundation Inc. led by its chair Dr. Lucio C. Tan (third from right, standing), donates P1 million to help build Centers for the Elderly, Poor and Sick throughout the country. Receiving the check on behalf of the Senate Spouses Foundation is Milagros Drilon (fourth from right), Virginia Barbers (fifth from right), and Alma Susana Flavier (2nd from right). Witnessing the check turnover are Tan Yan Kee trustees (from left, standing) Harry Tan; Tan Hui Bin; Shirley Chua; Mariano Tanenglian; Tan Eng Chan; former BSP governor Gabriel Singson (extreme right), and (from left, seated) former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, Ambassador Emmanuel Pelaez, and SGV founder Washington SyCip.

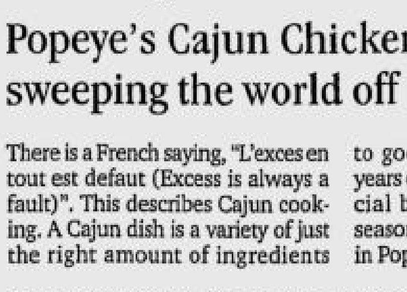
ALCATEL BULLISH ON RP MARKET

Patrick Delpy, director for key account management and customer development of Alcatel Asia-Pacific (left), met with media during a recent visit to Manila. Delpy discussed the company's leadership position in Asia Pacific and cited the Philippines as one of Alcatel's growth pillars in the region. Also shown is Alcatel in the Philippines president and country senior officer Santiago F. Gomez Jr. (center), and Alcatel in the Philippines chief technology officer Arturo U. Calaguas.

P FILES

Popeye's Cajun Chicken: the taste sweeping the world off its feet

There is a French saying, "L'exces en tout est defaut (Excess is always a fault)". This describes Cajun cooking. A Cajun dish is a variety of just the right amount of ingredients blended together to create a new and delicious taste.



Cajun is the American cuisine born in New Orleans and the bayous of Louisiana that features the combination of French cooking traditions and full flavors of native American ingredients. And in Popeyes' kitchen lies the heart of cajun tradition: fresh ingredients, unique seasonings and a dedication to good cooking that's over 200 years old. Cajun cooking means special blends of tasty, full-flavor seasonings and chicken marinated in Popeyes' secret spices. The flavor isn't just on the chicken, it's in the chicken. Whether you order its exciting spicy recipe or the delicious mild, you'll be tasting more than ordinary fast food.

The very first Popeyes Famous Fried Chicken was established in New Orleans in 1972. Since then, Popeyes has developed a variety of delicious side orders to complement its delicious chicken: the Red Beans and Rice, Cajun Rice (spicy and delicious), Buttermilk Biscuits (so delicious you won't need to butter them), Cajun Nuggets or Tenders, Onion Rings, and Mashed Potatoes and Cajun Gravy.

Find out what the folks from New Orleans to New York, Los Angeles, Bangkok and Seoul have been raving about. Find it out at Popeyes.

US CEOs fight to escape the accounting plague

BOCA RATON, Florida—Heads of major US corporations are trying hard to avoid the accounting plague—a sudden loss of investor confidence on fears fast and loose corporate bookkeeping has overstated financial results.

Wall Street and Washington are pressuring companies to shed more light on their often opaque accounting, ordering reviews of methods and even more disclosure of financial information, following the collapse of energy trader Enron Corp. and other corporate bankruptcies.

Chief executives attending the Business Council meeting of top CEOs that ended Friday said big business needs to restore investor trust in their bookkeeping—but many want politicians to stay put. New regulation is not the answer, they said.

"I don't think there's a company, a management, an audit committee that hasn't gone back and relooked at what they're doing," William Esrey, chief executive officer of Sprint Corp., said at a press conference this week.

"People are really scrutinizing and (want to) really make sure their houses are in order and clean," said Esrey, the Business Council's chair.

The Enron case, as well as the bankruptcy filing and accounting questions swirling around one-time telecom highflier Global Crossing Ltd., has thrust accounting into the spotlight.

CEOs are worried about the accounting plague—the sudden drop in investor confidence when worries surface about a company's books, driving down stock prices.

'Darwin took over'

But CEOs interviewed by Reuters say they think Corporate America and the auditing profession can address the accounting issues without the government's help. Lawmakers are considering a variety of bills stemming from the Enron collapse, including new auditor regulations.

Reuters

US recovery gains steam as long factory slump ends

NEW YORK—It's all but official: "R" is for recovery, not recession.

Economic reports on Friday showed the nation's factories snapped an 18-month slump in February as new orders piled up, consumer spending and income growth accelerated in January and construction activity surged at the fastest pace in a year.

"Recovery is here and it is here more forcefully than I think just about anybody expected," said Richard Berner, chief US economist at Morgan Stanley.

Blue-chip stocks soared 2.6 percent to six-month highs on signs the recession that began last March may be over and bond prices sank, driving 30-year bond yields to two-month peaks.

A leading factory gauge showed manufacturing activity expanded in February for the first time since July 2000, ending the sector's deepest downturn since the 1990-1991 recession, as orders poured in at the strongest pace in eight years.

The Institute for Supply Management's monthly Purchasing Managers Index rose to 54.7 in February from 49.9 in January, far stronger than the 50.9 level many on Wall Street expected.

An index reading above 50 denotes a growing manufacturing sector, which accounts for about one-sixth of US economic activity. The index had held below 50 for 1-1/2 years as manufacturers dragged the broader economy into recession.

Part of the manufacturing strength is the result of a year of aggressive liquidation of inventories by firms stuck with excess stocks after business investment crashed in late 2000.

With leaner inventories, factories can meet incoming orders by raising production, not clearing shelves, and will need to raise output to restock.

Ford Motor Co., for example, said vehicle sales fell 11.6 percent in February, but announced a 4-percent increase in production with inventories now below year-ago levels. General Motors Corp. also plans production increases.

But Berner said what was most encouraging was that factory activity was being driven by strong underlying demand needed to sustain manufacturers after they restock their inventories.

The ISM's New Orders Index, a measure of pipeline demand for factory goods, surged from 55.3 in January to 62.8 in February, its highest since 1994.

Reuters

Opec urges rivals to stick to output cuts through 2003

LONDON—Opec wants rival producers to stick with a global output cut until 2003 and will keep its own production at current low levels if they do, Secretary General Ali Rodriguez said according to a statement received here Friday.

Speaking ahead of a crucial trip to Moscow to discuss the output pact, Rodriguez said producers inside and outside the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) would have to wait until demand picks up before they could start pumping larger crude volumes again.

"Cooperation is necessary to maintain stability in the market until well into 2003, by which time sufficient demand may have developed to allow both Opec and non-Opec producers to relax reductions," said Rodriguez, as quoted by the Opecna news agency.

The Vienna-based agency added that Rodriguez had committed to keeping output steady throughout 2002 and had expressed confidence that Russia would show the same restraint.

Under the output deal, Opec countries reduced output by 1.5 million barrels a day, and non-Opec countries by around 460,000 bpd, in order to rescue prices which fell sharply amid the global economic slowdown.

Russia however only grudgingly signed up to the output squeeze, and many experts believe that having observed an export cutback through the first quarter, Moscow now wants to turn up the taps again to capture greater market share.

Rodriguez will be accompanied by Opec president Rilwanu Lukman in Moscow for talks with Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov and Energy Minister Igor Yusufov, according to diplomatic sources in Moscow.

AFP

Andersen agrees to pay $217M to settle lawsuit

NEW YORK—Accounting firm Andersen agreed on Friday to pay $217 million to a bankrupt fund-raising group to settle accounting malpractice charges, the second largest payout by one of the "Big Five" firms.

The settlement averted a trial slated to begin on Monday in an Arizona superior court over allegations of negligence against Andersen by a trust for the Baptist Foundation of America. The group was founded in 1948 to raise funds for southern Baptists.

Andersen did not admit any wrongdoing in the settlement, which trails in size only to the $335 million payment in 1999 by rival Ernst & Young to investors in travel and real estate company Cendant Corp.

"We are elated with the results because it puts significant money in the hands of our investors soon rather than after a lengthy trial and appellate process that comes with some significant risks," said Sean Coffey, the lead trial lawyer for the plaintiffs in the case.

He added that the $217 million, which Andersen agreed to pay within 45 days, will allow investors in the fund to recoup about 32 cents on each dollar they invested.

When funds from liquidation of the foundation's remaining assets and awards from other pending litigation are factored in, investors could end up receiving about two-thirds of their money—a high percentage for such a case, Coffey said.

Andersen's $217 million payout was one of the highest ever by a major accounting firm, but the company could wind up paying far more to settle lawsuits for its role in the collapse of energy trader Enron Corp.

According to a report in an online edition of the Wall Street Journal, Andersen has offered $750 million. The Journal cited attorneys familiar with the proposal.

Andersen declined to discuss possible settlement terms or whether talks were underway.

Andersen, which lost pharmaceutical giant Merck & Co. as a 30-year audit client on Friday, said it settled the lawsuit to avoid the cost of protracted litigation.

Andersen "is eager to focus on the future," the firm said in a statement. "This settlement is an important step in building confidence in our firm."

The Baptist foundation, in bankruptcy and represented by the liquidation trust, alleged Andersen breached its fiduciary duties by failing to disclose financial wrongdoing by former trust managers, even after a series of whistle-blowers alerted Andersen to the fraud.

Andersen cast shared blame on other entities, including the state of Arizona, the foundation's law firm and the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention. It said they all were warned of possible irregularities at the fund-raising group and failed to act.

Reuters

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BSP nixes changes to laundering law

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT has rejected calls from a financial watchdog to amend the country's new law against money laundering.

In an interview, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the Macapagal administration would instead make changes through the implementing rules and regulations being drafted for the law.

"There is no sense in amending the law now if we can address the concerns in the implementing rules and regulations," Buenaventura said.

He said he wanted to see whether the rules that the government would produce would meet concerns raised by the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force.

In a letter to Buenaventura, FATF president Clarie Lo said the Philippines should make more legal changes to be removed from a list of states seen as not doing enough to fight money laundering.

Lo said the passing of an anti-money laundering law last year was "an important first step."

The FATF will not impose threatened sanctions on Manila in the light of the legislation, Lo said. But Lo warned that the country would remain on the list until "a number of concerns" with the anti-money laundering measures were addressed.

To address one concern, the FATF, the financial watchdog of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, asked the Macapagal administration to lower the P4-million threshold amount under which suspect accounts could be pried open.

The task force also said that the government agency tasked with fighting money laundering still had limited powers to open deposits due to strict bank secrecy and complained that the law was not applicable to deposits and investments made before the legislation was introduced.

This "seriously inhibits the (investigating agency's) investigative power and is therefore a serious deficiency," the task force said.

The central bank also had limited powers to look into certain numbered accounts, the FATF said.

"It is our hope that your government could take the necessary action, including any legislative amendments as early as possible and provide a timeframe for other remedial action on concerns that cannot be addressed immediately," the FATF said. ***With a report from AFP***

JG earmarks ₱9B to expand food business

By Doris C. Dumlao

JG SUMMIT Holdings Inc. has earmarked about P9 billion this year to expand its core branded food and property businesses in line with its vision to compete in on a global scale.

JG Summit president and chief operating officer Lance Gokongwei told reporters on Friday that this amount excluded the P13.5 billion that his company had earmarked for its mobile phone business.

JG Summit's total expansion fund of P22.5 billion this year is more than twice as large as last year's P10 billion.

The bigger amount is accounted for by the group's foray into the mobile phone business.

"On the food side, our plants in Shanghai and Jakarta will be operational in April and May. In the Philippines, what we'll be expanding is the flour business," Gokongwei disclosed.

Asked how the group was bracing for an ongoing consolidation in the local food sector, Gokongwei said: "We're happy with the core categories, where we compete primarily in snacks, chocolates, candies and biscuits. Our strategy is to increase our business domestically and then build a larger footprint regionally because we expect that with the Afta (Asean Free Trade Area) and WTO (World Trade Organization), if you focus on one country, you'll become very vulnerable."

"We have the capability to succeed offshore. We've demonstrated that in our Thailand and Malaysia operations which are doing well," he added.

On the commodity side, he said, JG Summit would expand its flour and petrochemical businesses.

GMA names new BCDA chair, president

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has named Florencio Padernal as chair of the Bases Conversion Development Authority.

Padernal is a registered civil engineer. He holds a doctorate degree in public administration and a master's degree in business administration.

A former director of the Department of Public Works and Highways, he went on to work as chief technical adviser of the World Bank in China and Mongolia in the early '90s.

He has also been president of the Manila chapter of the Philippine Institute of Civil Engineers, Philippine Water Works Association and the Rotary Club of Kamuning West RI District 3780.

He is currently president of the Ilocos Sur National High School Global Foundation Inc.

Former Clark Development Corp. president Rufo Colayco was named BCDA president and chief executive.

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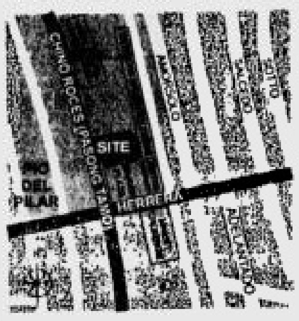

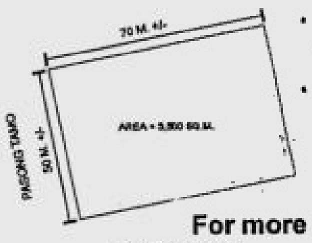

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- Utilities readily available to the site include overhead power, water, telephone and public sewer.

For more information, please contact

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Ticket to go up need not come from Harvard

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

A DEGREE from a known Western graduate school is considered by many as the first class ticket to go up the corporate ladder—be it in Asia or in North America.

A person's educational background will always be scrutinized when he is applying for a job, even when he is being "head hunted."

But global developments such as economic globalization and immigration have prompted these same Western learning institutions to look East and provide better education for their students.

They have been trying over the past years to assimilate Eastern culture and business philosophies into their curriculum.

A few schools from the United States and Europe have set up ventures in Asia like INSEAD, France's top business school, University of Chicago Graduate School of Business and Columbia University.

The Philippine shores have not been spared. Foreign schools, albeit not as known as the prestigious Western schools, have invaded Philippine learning shores like Thames International Business School.

Foreign schools such as the IESE Business School and the graduate school of management of University of Navarra in Spain, and the University of Chicago, have been actively scouting for Filipino students to improve the student mix in their universities.

These schools said in a previous report that they had to recruit more students from other countries as they need to have a good exchange of know-how between the West and the East and provide a globalized environment for their students to enhance their brand of education.

Many Filipinos, however, still think that a Western education is better than a local one. Too often, you come across executives who apologize for being educated locally, that they only took their master's degrees in Manila and not in Harvard nor Wharton.

Taking the argument further, employers feel that those who finished in foreign graduate schools are deemed better executives than those who graduated from the Asian Institute of Management, the University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University and De La Salle University.

This kind of thinking is not about to change over the next few years, maybe not even in a decade.

Learning about Asia

Ironically, it is the Western schools themselves that seem to have hit on the idea that there is much to be learned from the local educational institutions and that they may not even be as well equipped in handling developments in developing nations.

This of course stems from the fact that growth has been coming from Asia over the last decade and if there is any money to be made in the future, it will also be in Asia. The foreign schools' disadvantage is that they are just starting to get to know how Asia works.

The Wharton School, one of the best business schools in the US and located in the University of Pennsylvania, is reportedly looking at a set-up in Singapore. The University of Chicago is already there.

The J.L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management of the Northwestern University in Illinois, on the other hand, is eyeing a satellite office in Hong Kong.

While foreign schools are still looking at Asia, local schools are enhancing their intimate knowledge of how Asia works.

Washington SyCip, founder of the SGV Group and chair of the AIM board of governors, points out that "what AIM has that none of the other graduate schools have is know-how on how to

TICKET/ C4

WASHINGTON SyCip gets one of Asia's top management schools named after him; a move which the Asian Institute of Management's head Roberto F. de Ocampo totally agrees with.

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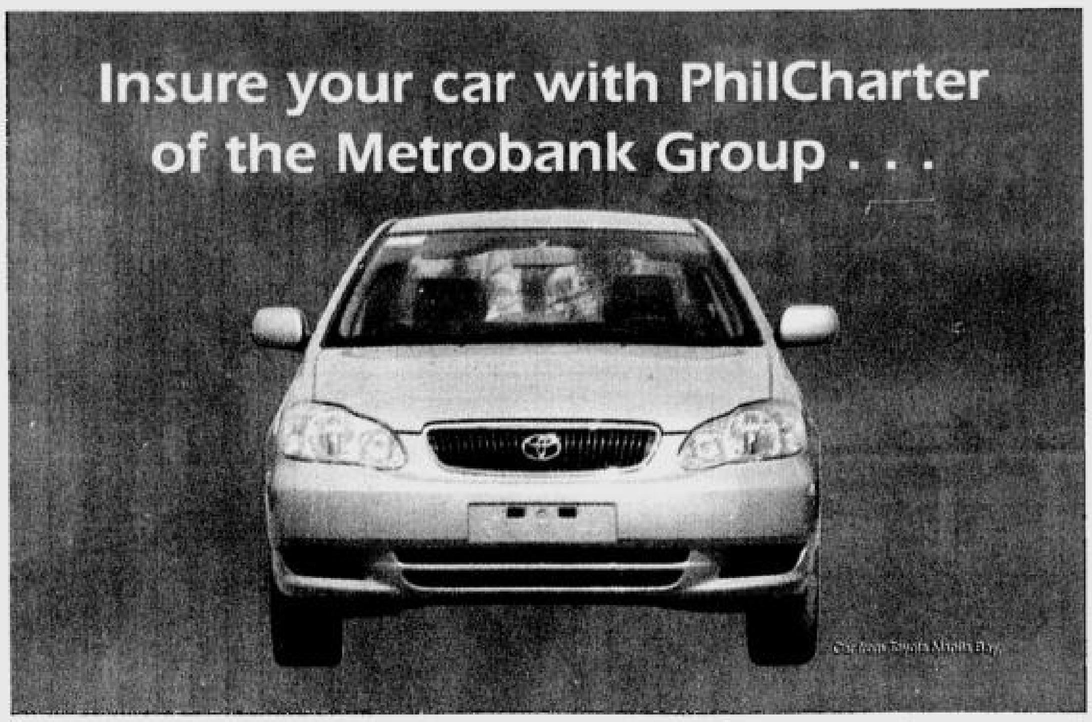
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Response to the call for good governance

MAPPING THE FUTURE

By Ricardo S. Pascua

At about this time last year, we pinned our hopes on a new beginning. We had installed a new government. The desire to create a better future filled all our hearts. Our Association chose *"Good Governance for Nation Building"* as its theme for the last year's thrusts in the light of the crisis of political leadership that just passed.

The mood of joy and triumph was, however, abruptly interrupted at the turn of events. Manila's streets became bloody as a result of the so-called "Edsa III." These were followed by the kidnapping spree perpetrated by the Abu Sayyaf in Palawan and in Mindanao, the subsequent military assault against bandits, the unbridled disregard by society's wayward elements for peace and order, and the sustained rumors of a destabilization plot that sowed a new climate of uncertainty within the country.

Peace and order emerged as the critical problem that hounded our new government. Despite its fragile stability, however, it began to lay the groundwork for political reforms and development programs that, it believes, can lead the country to improved stability and better economic times. Witness the commendable achievement in the growth of GDP and GNP, despite all of the problems in the country and despite the difficulty in the rest of the world.

The cloud of uncertainty aggravated in September as global terrorists displayed the height of its atrocity with its "devilish" assault on New York's World Trade Center. And with it came the decline of the global economy and the world war against terrorism that ensued and is still to end. A new wave of economic problems crept into the country. As global markets weakened, many domestic businesses and industries failed. Unemployment rose, turning to be heaviest burden to the new government. Except for the triumph over a base and failing government, there were few, if any, bright spots that marked the year that passed.

And as the year 2001 ended, we're just beginning to see the glimmers of better economic times ahead.

Nevertheless, despite the realities, the Management Association of the Philippines vigorously sustained these activities and pursued its programmed thrusts for the year. Our scorecard shows new programs that supported our vision. Our collective efforts and dedication further strengthened our Association's leadership and visibility in the business community and yielded achievements that reflected the quality of work of MAP as leaders in the management field. These can be seen in the programs supporting government initiatives of development of the economy and in commitment to keep, to help in nation building.

I am pleased to report the year-round results of the Association's efforts in the light of the objectives we set at the beginning of the year of last year, and consistent with our chosen theme for the year.

First, we have today a pool of volunteer consultants in various management disciplines willing to offer free consultation services to different government institutions. Memoranda of agreement have been drafted between MAP and several government agencies and bureaus for discussion and signing for the programs to roll.

Second, we have crafted a Management Code of Ethics, which states clear and meaningful standards than can be used as basis for measuring performance of governance and can help in identifying weaknesses for easier formulation of effective measures.

Third, MAP has continued to make its voice heard on national issues, initiating symposiums and actively participating in various fora that discussed subjects of national interest, particularly on opportunities that can improve and solve problems that affect our society. Such subjects included concerns on political and economic stability. We have also extensively used our "MAPping the Future" column in the Philippine Daily Inquirer to discuss various issues of national significance, in articulating responsible management leadership and in advocating the virtues of good governance. MAP, either singly or in collaboration with other respected organizations, has also issued statements on issues of national concern. It also developed a policy in addressing national issues as a body.

Fourth, we now have a committee on effective governance. This new committee held presentations on the national budget, monetary supply, an Integrated Program for Increased Production, Agricultural Competitiveness and Governance, and the justice system.

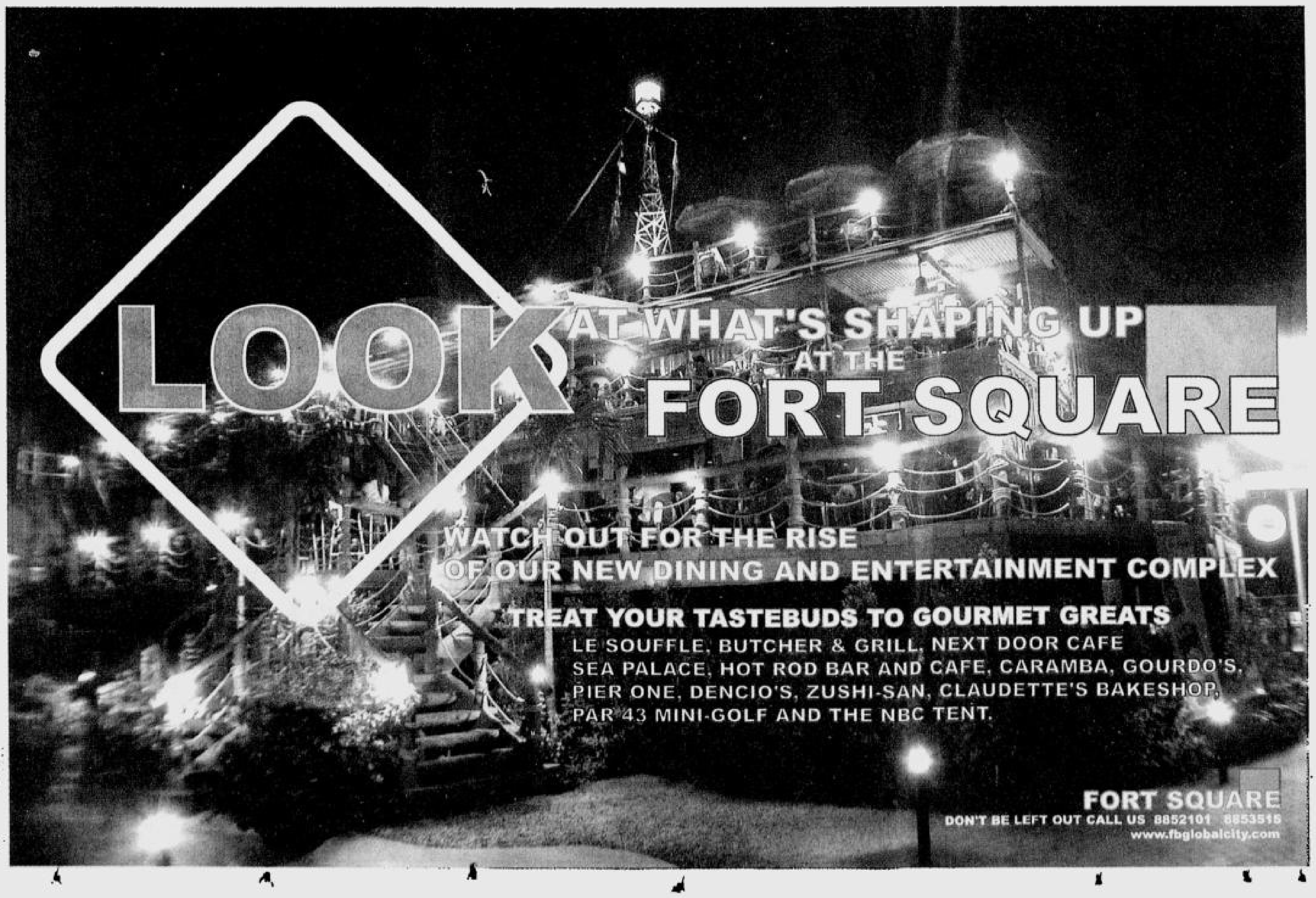
Fifth, we have begun the initial spadework in pursuit of a potential long-term solution to government's creaky delivery of basic education services through the voucher system. The Asian Institute of Management has already submitted a research proposal on the subject and hopefully, with appropriate funding, the study will be concluded soon.

There were other noteworthy projects that we can highlight: the Annual MAP Conference which dwelt on the theme "Managing for Global Competitiveness: Strategy, Re-engineering, TQM and IT," the Model City Project, the Philippine Best Employers Project, among many others.

Our membership committee produced last year the highest number of new members ever. We had 72 new members registered last year.

Partly as a result of this, MAP last year recorded the highest net operating income of over P1.2 million for the last 10 years.

A year is indeed insufficient to complete all the projects that we have conceptualized. We hope that our incoming MAP president and board will consider continuing some of the projects we left unfinished or undone and it will be done, we believe, in accordance with MAP's tradition. *(The author was the 2001 president of Management Association of the Philippines and former president and CEO of Metro Pacific Corp. and Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. This article contains the valedictory speech delivered by the author during the MAP Inaugural Meeting and Induction of 2002 MAP Board of Governors on Feb. 8, 2002. The MAP Secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph.)*



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Create an environment where people like to work

MANAGEMEI STYLES

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

HOTEL staff usually work beyond the eight-hour schedule put in by their counterparts in other sectors, which is why the very least that management should do is to make their stay worthwhile.

And it is not just about the salary, according to new Manila Peninsula general manager David J. Batchelor. It is about creating an environment where people like to work, thus, making it easy for them to serve the hotel's clients with a genuine smile.

"Creating this kind of environment means taking a look at staff welfare, making sure that they have a good 'back of house area' with nice and clean lockers, good uniforms and adopting a policy of promoting people from within as much as possible," Batchelor explains.

As a manager, he says he makes it a point to immediately praise his staff for a job well done, and conversely, acknowledge inevitable mistakes. He does this by talking privately to the person concerned and explaining why it should not happen again.

"Rather than hit them with a big stick, I study these mistakes and if the system has to be changed to make sure it does not happen again, then the system should be changed," he adds.

The Manila Pen's new general manager moved up the ranks so he knows how it is to be a subordinate. An economics graduate of the University of Adelaide in Australia, he went to the hotel business in 1992 as financial controller of The Far Eastern Plaza Hotel in Taipei, Taipan.

He then moved to The Peninsula in Hong Kong as financial controller, and after six years he was promoted to resident manager until Nov. 11 last year when he was assigned to Manila.

He realized through the years in the hotel business that leadership by intimidation is not effective, so he does the opposite.

"Leadership by intimidation does not create a pleasant working environment so I don't do that, but if I see something I don't like, I call their attention to it. I treat them the way that I want to be treated, and I don't want people who scream or yell," he says.

Batchelor also lets his people decide on what they think is best for their area of responsibility, so that they could decide in an instant. This is crucial, he says, in a service industry like the hotels where little problems always crop up.

He describes himself as a firm but fair boss who treats everybody the same, although he takes special care of people in the frontline such as the telephone operator and the room attendants.

"They are the ones who interact directly with the guests, they are our representative to the public so we need to look after their welfare. We cannot have an army of generals," he stresses.

One of the most effective ways, he says, to boost the morale of the frontliners as well as the rest of the organization is to foster a sense of ownership across the group.

"If I say that I want the hotel to be the best, then they should want the same thing. If we want the same thing then we will all take care of the hotel in the same way that we take care of our things and our house," he says.

"Attention to detail is also very important for me, I want everybody to present the best of the hotel every time. This means that people should pick up trash or little things that would spoil our image and they should do this because they want to," Batchelor adds.

He says he aligns his management philosophy to that of the Peninsula Hotel group.

BATCHELOR

Standard Chartered PBC

SEATED from left to right: PBCom president and CEO Isidro Alcantara Jr., SCB group executive director Mike DeNoma and SCB CEO Annemarie Durbin.

Unibanks issue first co-brand credit card

STANDARD Chartered Bank and Philippine Bank of Communications have signed a memorandum of agreement that would pave the way for the issuance of a co-branded international credit card.

The agreement provides for the issuance of Standard Chartered—PBCom Mastercard, which will be issued to the 60,000-strong PBCom customer base within its 65-branch network.

This is the first co-brand credit card which Standard Chartered has signed up with another bank.

The Standard Chartered—PBCom Mastercard will be an internationally accepted credit card recognized in over 13 million establishments worldwide, fully loaded with all the benefits of a Standard Chartered credit card.

It will offer a two-tiered interest rate scheme that goes as low as 2.95 percent per month based on the outstanding balance, cash rewards for every peso spent and balance transfer.

Signing the agreement were Annemarie Durbin, SCB chief executive; Isidro Alcantara Jr., PBCom president & chief executive officer; Ajay Kanwal, SCB general manager for Credit Cards & Personal Loans; and Virgilio Katigbak, PBCom senior vice president.

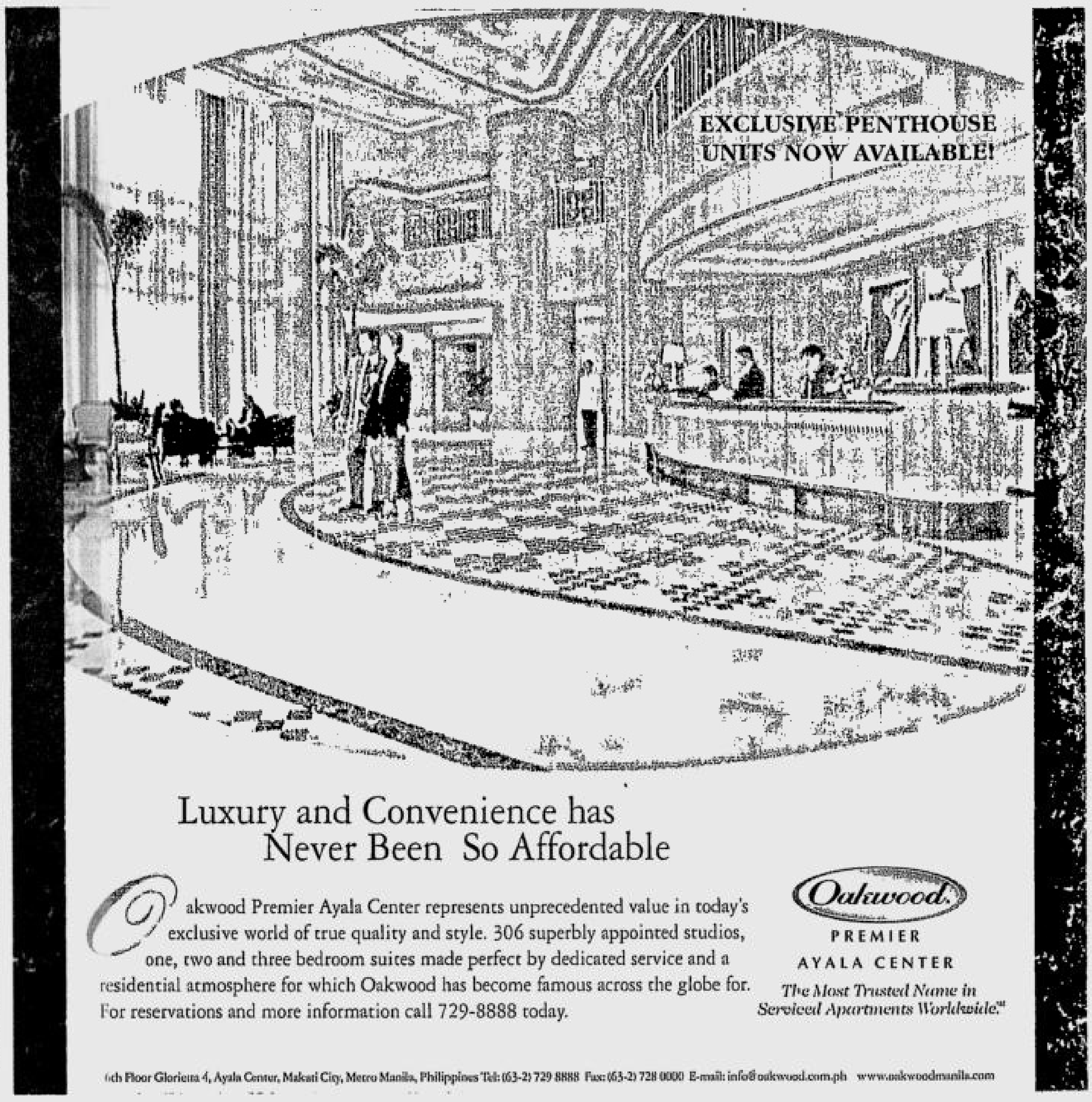
Mike DeNoma, group executive director of Standard Chartered Plc., even flew from Singapore to witness the signing.

The MOA comes at a time when Standard Chartered Bank Philippines reported a respectable performance for 2001 despite the difficult economic environment.

SCB CEO Annemarie Durbin added: "We are delighted that our first co-brand card with another bank is with PBCom. We're proud that PBCom has decided that we are the right partner for this project. This is definitely a partnership that brings together two trusted names in the banking industry."

On the other hand, PBCom president and CEO Isidro Alcantara remarked:

"We are sure that the Standard Chartered-PBCom Mastercard will benefit our mutual customers and will reinforce our commitment to quality banking in answering customer's requirements with relevant products, implementing innovations for better delivery of services and identifying new markets to explore."



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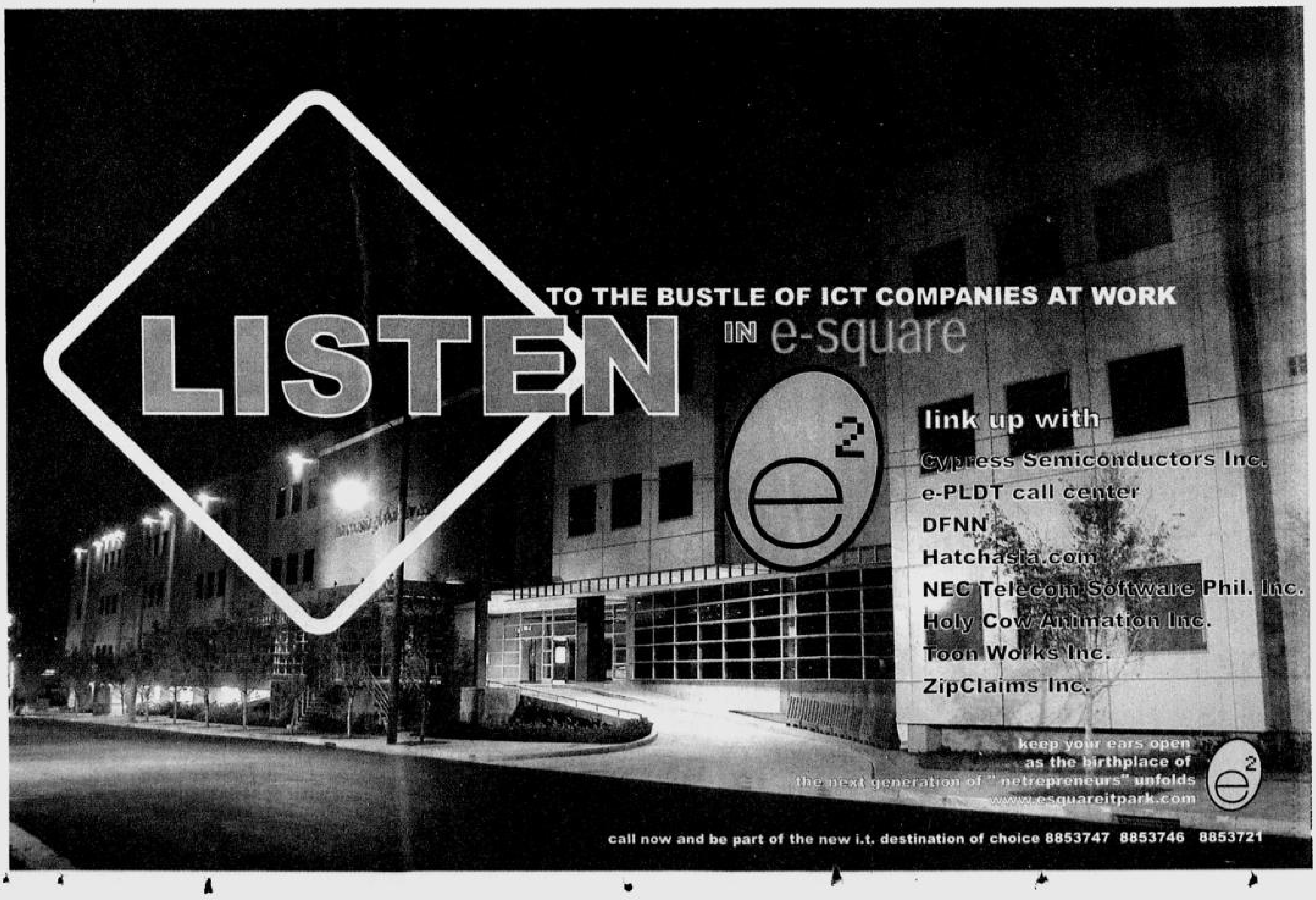

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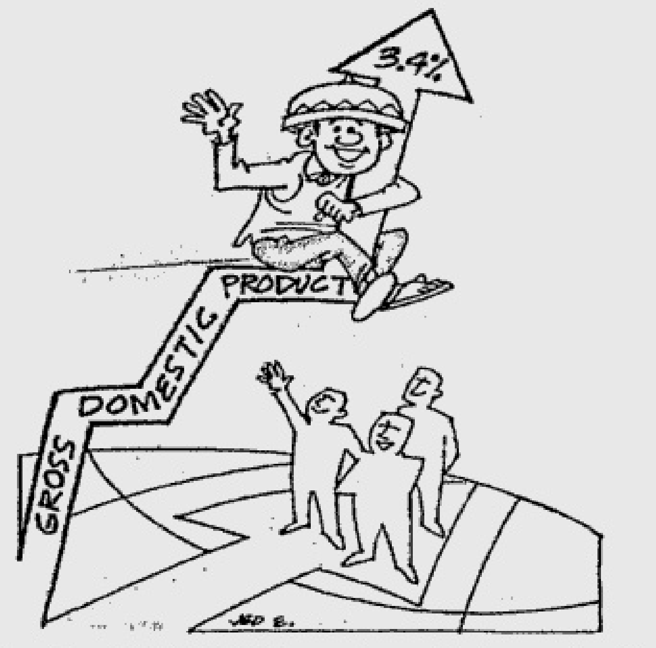
Despite political bad news, there is good economic news

By Dennis Arroyo



WHILE her neighbors' economies contracted, the Philippines' gross domestic product (GDP) managed to grow by 3.4 percent in 2001. This was a bit higher than the official projection of 3.3 percent. Gross national product, GDP plus income from abroad, rose by 3.7 percent in 2001.

The 2001 growth rates, by sector, were: 3.9 percent in agriculture, 1.9 percent in industry, and 4.3 percent in services. Industry remains a weak spot, as it declined for the third straight month since September 2001.

The Philippines' sturdy growth comes as a surprise. Multilateral agencies had lower estimates: 2.9 percent by the IMF, 2.7 percent by the World Bank, and 2.5 percent by the Asian Development Bank.

Filipino economists are surprised. "We have underestimated the capacity of the economy to grow," said Dr. Mario Lamberte, president of the state-run Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS).

Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr., president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, stated, "Our worst fear was unfounded after all, so let's look more positively at the economy."

However, poverty remains a persistent problem. Poverty incidence, or the percentage of the population below the official poverty threshold, is 39.4 percent as of the latest survey in 2000. That represents a 2.6-percent increase from the 1997 reading.

Particularly worrisome is the poverty found in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao. In this self-rule area, 35.5 percent of the population have incomes even below the food threshold. That deprivation may help explain why the region suffers from kidnappings and separatist rebellion.

Growth is of little consolation to the unemployed. While the unemployment rate has improved, it is still cause for concern. The latest available national survey counts 9.8 percent unemployed as of October 2001.

The official 2002 growth projection for GDP is 4 to 4.5 percent, depending on the recovery of the global economy. Agriculture is seen to grow by 2.7-3.7 percent, as the rehabilitation of irrigation facilities should compensate for the mild El Niño drought. Industry should expand by 3.3-3.7 percent as exports recover.

The growth rate for services is forecast at 5.0-5.5 percent, powered by telecommunications and retail trade.

Investors more confident

Moody's Investors Service has upgraded the Philippines' outlook: the "negative" rating has become "stable."

Philippine high-yield bonds are also seen to perform better than other Asian bonds, according to the HSBC.

"The demand for Philippine bonds is getting strong, as seen on the performance of the bonds recently issued by the Philippine sovereign. These have all led to an incredible change in perception about the Philippines," said Mark St. V. Bucknall, head of the HSBC debt finance group for Asia and the Pacific.

The composite index of the Philippine Stock Exchange shot up to a six-month high last Jan. 21 to 1,361.94 points. That was the highest level it reached since July 31, 2001.

Net portfolio inflows, according to central bank records, amounted to $68.7 million as of the end of 2001. The trend is a total reversal from the outflows of $149 million by the end of 2000.

Filipino businessmen are now bullish on the economy, according to a survey by the Makati Business Club. The poll, released on Jan. 22, found that 45 percent of the executives expected the economy to rise on the momentum of last year's healthy GDP growth.

While half said they would not make any new investments in 2002, a sizeable 46 percent were ready to take the plunge. The median investment amounted to more than P500 million.

Not just hot air

Adding to the boost is the bonanza of Malampaya. The gas field will make the Philippines more self-sufficient in energy, shore up foreign exchange reserves, bring in investments and may pull down the cost of electricity.

The offshore field near Palawan contains 2.7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 85 million barrels of "condensate." That's enough to power 25 percent of the country's energy needs. It will cut $700 million in oil imports every year. The gas facility, an investment of $4.5 billion, will provide $13 billion in royalties during the next two decades. This is the largest ever foreign investment in the country.

Then last Feb. 13, the papers reported another vital find. The Victoria-3 well of a consortium led by the PNOC Energy Development Corp., uncovered a natural gas field in Tarlac.

Exports' contraction

Because of the global downturn, merchandise exports from the Philippines contracted by 15.6 percent. The level was $32.148 billion in 2001, compared to $38.078 billion in 2000.

This is the first contraction to hit the export sector since 1985. As a result, the deficit in the balance of payments rose to $ 1.065 billion for January-November 2001. It was $918 million for the same period in 2000. However, the conventional wisdom is that the global economy will turn around by the second semester of 2002.

Fortunately, the American market seems to be on the mend. Hobbled by recession, the US economy surprised analysts who expected more contraction in the final quarter of 2001. Economists had predicted it would shrink by one percent, but the economy actually grew by 0.2 percent in real terms, according to the US Commerce Department. Among the driving factors were the expansion in government spending and more consumer purchases of new cars. The data strengthen the prevailing view that the United States is on recovery.

However, the recovery would benefit the Philippines only after a lag of one to two quarters, according to Gilbert Llanto, deputy director general of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda).

Tech sector to rebound

Revenues from industries related to information and communications technology (ICT) are expected to rise by 67 percent in the next three years. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) projects the increase due to the government's greater focus on the sector. ICT is now top priority, alongside electronics and semiconductors, garments, and food products. ICT generated $349 million in 2001.

The focus is timely, as technology research firm International Data Corp. (IDC) forecasts Asia's recovery in the sector by June 2002. "IDC sees an IT market recovery in the second half of 2002," said David Yew, IDC's regional research analyst. This recovery by June will prune the number of players though, according to the Gartner research house.

IDC notes that Asia will be the fastest growing IT market in 2002. The region will witness new telecommunications records. Cell phone users in Asia will exceed 300 million, equal to 30 percent of humanity's total. Internet users will hit 120 million, or 20 percent of the world's total.

Fiscal deficit slashed

Moody's Investors Services is impressed with how the government was able to contain the fiscal deficit. Moody's said the achievement "was fairly ambitious for the new administration in view of the debilitating fiscal legacy it inherited and the poor external environment it has faced." The context was the payment of the debt to state contractors and local governments left hanging by the corrupt Estrada administration. In that era, the budget deficit ballooned to almost P225 billion as borrowings had tripled and public spending swelled.

However, the succeeding administration kept the budget deficit to P147.02 billion in 2001. In fact the Bureau of Internal Revenue was able to surpass its revenue collection targets for the first time since the 1997 Asian Crisis. For 2002, the government aims to squeeze the budget deficit to less than P 130 billion.

Inflation at 21-month low

The inflation rate dropped to a 21-month low of 3.8 percent in January 2002 from a year earlier. This subdued level should help stimulate consumption and stir economic activity. It also allows the monetary authorities more freedom to slash interest rates and boost growth.

Neda projects an inflation rate of 4 percent-5 percent for 2002, which is lower than the original 5 percent-6 percent.

Key interest rates

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has been pushing down its interest rates to new lows. Its policy rates of 7.5 percent for borrowing and 9.75 percent for lending, are the lowest levels in six years. Further, the reserve requirement has fallen to 16 percent, from the previous 18 percent. This easing of monetary policy has released P26 billion in extra cash circulating in the banking system.

Liquidity is readily available, prompting money managers to see 2002 as a year of low interest rates. Dampened inflation is helping ease interest rates. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael B. Buenaventura stated that key overnight rates may drop another 50-100 basis points for as long as inflation is contained.

Foreign exchange reserves

Gross international reserves (GIR) rose to $15.7 billion in December, and the increase is partly the fruit of Eurobond floats. While the original target was $500 million, the actual amount sold was $800 million because of heavy investor demand.

The GIR level is above the psychological barrier of $14 billion, so the Bangko Sentral has the funds to fight off currency speculators. The reserves can pay for almost 5 months worth of imports and are equal to 2.7 times the nation's debts that will mature in a year.

Food prices to slide

Agriculture grew by 3.9 percent in 2001, a faster rate than the 3.3 percent of 2000. The year 2001 saw greater harvests in rice, which rose by 4.6 percent, and corn, which increased by 12 percent. This was the result of rehabilitation work on the nation's irrigation systems and a program to popularize high-yield hybrid seeds from China. Favorable weather contributed to the bumper crop. As such, the Philippines would import less than 500,000 tons of rice in 2002, compared with 781,000 tons imported in 2001. This already factors in the mild El Niño predicted for the second half of the year. Expanding food production should help keep the inflation rate in check.

Ticket up corporate ladder need not come from Harvard

From page C1

manage development economies and managing a developing nation."

(AIM's graduate school of business management has been renamed the W. Sycip Graduate School of Business to honor SyCip as "the indomitable spirit behind the Institute.")

Local schools, however, also realize that they cannot rely on local knowledge alone. They also need to bring in Western ways.

The Philippines' local institutions, thus, have tied up with Western schools. AIM for instance has a relationship with Harvard that allows it to use Harvard's cases for their graduate programs.

And like its Western counterparts, AIM has made changes and adjustments to make it more attuned to the needs of the times.

AIM, which is considered one of Asia's leading graduate schools of management, has been in existence for nearly 34 years and has produced over 30,000 alumni from 63 countries.

AIM president Roberto F. de Ocampo says the school has continued to be named among the top spots of the best business schools in Asia and its executive program was still deemed as among the best.

"We continue to hold our own and we have not been sitting on our haunches," says De Ocampo.

He says the school has had to expand its course offerings and go beyond the traditional programs.

Whole brain thinking

Two years ago, AIM set up a Master in Entrepreneurship program that was geared toward helping the small and medium sized industries. The institution has also entered into a venture with the World Bank for information technology studies. AIM has also introduced whole brain thinking in its program.

The aim of whole brain thinking is to teach its students, expected to be corporate leaders or future CEOs, to look beyond the numbers and see the effect of their business decisions on the people and society at large.

Washington SyCip, who remains as a member of the school's board of governors, points out the school has also started to teach executive students to be more responsible.

And the other area where AIM has been experiencing a "renaissance" is in living up to the belief that management is not just needed by a business enterprise.

"We go beyond managing a business enterprise and looking at other areas that require management—humanities, arts, education, health," says De Ocampo.

This is why AIM has set up programs for museum, hospital and school administrators.

This month will be a busy one for AIM as it plays host to the East-West Center's 2nd Asia-Pacific Executive Forum from March 5 to 7. It is the first to be held outside of the United States and brings together more than 25 leading Asian and US experts on economics as well as politics and security to discuss business strategies under the conference's theme of "Opportunities and Challenges: Business Strategies in a Changing Economic Environment."

AIM will also hold the Joint Annual Meeting of the AIM Boards of Governors and Trustees from March 8 to 9. The meeting brings together more than 40 distinguished leaders in the fields of business and education from the Philippines and 15 other countries.

Former President Corazon C. Aquino has been invited to be a member of the board.

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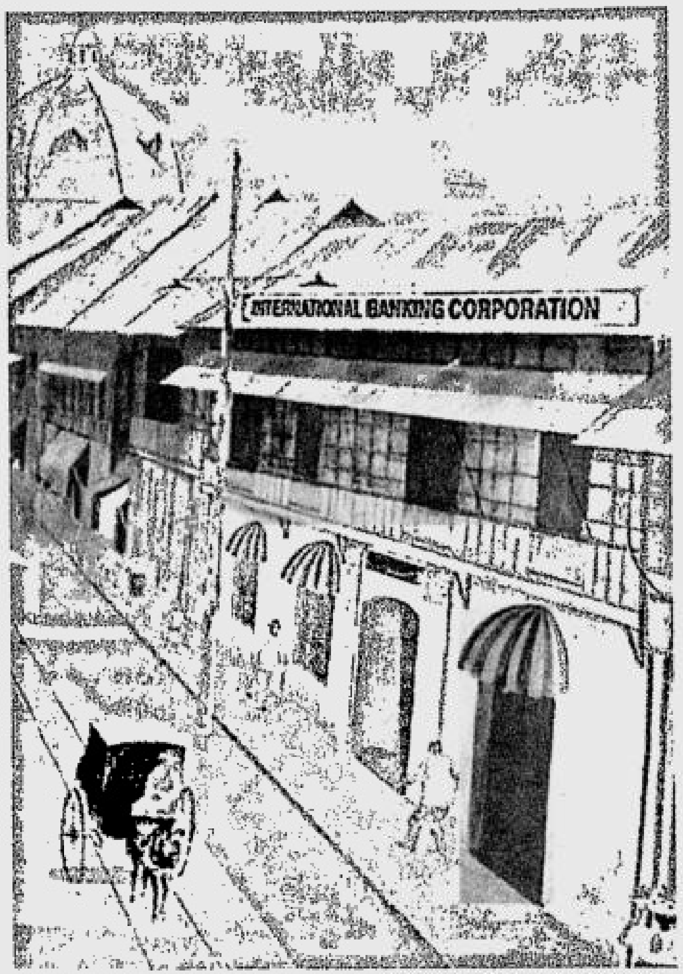
CITIBANK *celebrates 100 years*

A hundred years of sterling success and service

THE COUNTRY'S largest foreign bank celebrates this year its 100th anniversary in the Philippines. It is also marking its Centennial year in Asia, and Citibank Philippines will be celebrating alongside neighbor countries China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan and India.



THEN KNOWN as International Banking Corporation, Citibank opened its first Manila branch in 1902 along Calle Rosario in Binondo, Manila.

Citibank found its fledgling beginnings along the street of Calle Rosario in Binondo. It was in July 14, 1902, then known as the International Banking Corporation (IBC), when the bank set up shop in a leased stable room in Manila. The lease agreement stipulated that during times of flood, the bank would provide shelter to two ponies in a dry area located behind the vault.

As luck would have it, it rained on the very first day the bank opened, and a horse owned by the landlord had to take shelter in the office. Good thing the "unusual" arrangement did not deter early customers who still opened accounts with the bank.

Pioneering Years

The first few years of the bank were devoted to developing export products, particularly sugar, copra and hemp. By 1912, the bank had grown to be the largest and most successful American bank in the world.

When the Second World War reached the country in 1941, with characteristic foresight, the bank's officers spirited away all records overseas for safekeeping. This allowed the institution to become the first bank to re-open in 1945, allowing its depositors to rebuild their lives with their pre-war savings.

It was also the time when credit was desperately needed by the devastated country. Rising to the challenge, Citibank quickly provided credit for wartorn industries and trade channels were opened for overseas investments.

Ten years after the war, a merger with the First National Bank of the City of New York began the special moniker Citibank. The coming 60s and 70s marked a brisk spirit of growth and demands for consumer finance began to flourish. Citibank now started to provide leasing and financial services to cover education, medical needs, car financing and home improvement.

From its head office along the Pasig River, the move was eventually made to Makati, along the new and thriving business center on Paseo de Roxas.

In the 80s, Citibank brought another first with the launching of ATMs or Automated Teller Machines, as part of its commitment to bring world-class banking to the Filipino. Model Branches followed, where customers entering a Manila branch will have the same experience as clients banking in New York.

To be able to serve its clients round the clock, seven days a week, Citibank gave birth to CitiPhone, creating the paradigm for 24-Hour Customer Service. Simply by calling one telephone number, Citibank customers can access their credit card or bank accounts, and speak with empowered CitiPhone officers that had the knowledge and prowess to be of true service.

Changing the credit landscape

With the 90s came a dynamic and fast-tracked shift in gears as Citibank introduced new consumer products and innovations. Ready Credit was launched, a fully-revolving credit line that gave users access to ready cash whenever they needed. It struck an important chord to the rising number of entrepreneurs and middle class families.

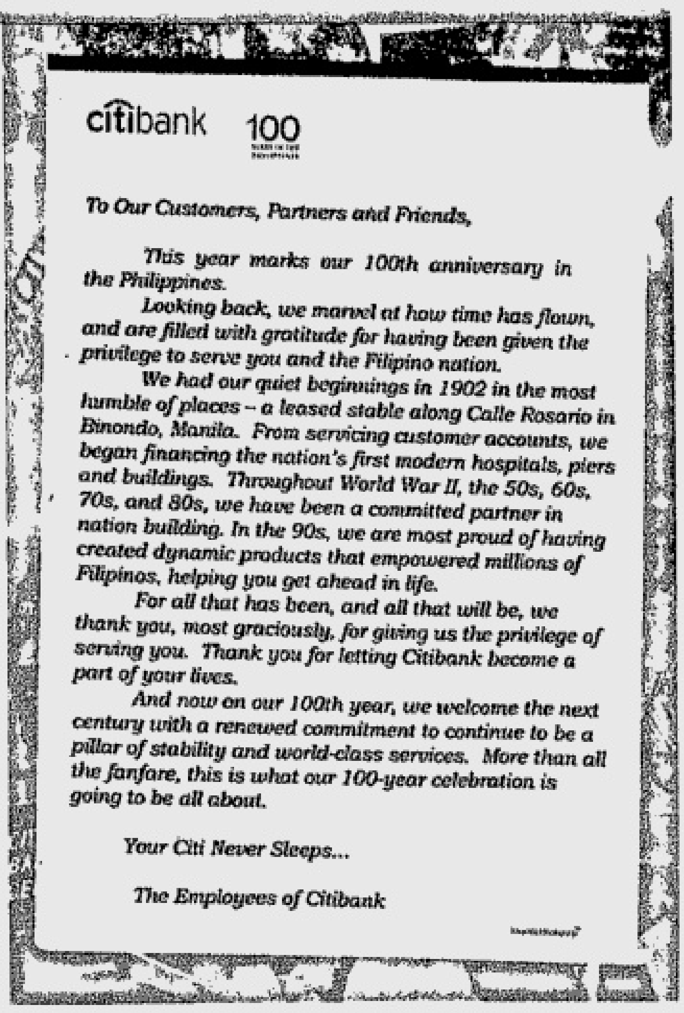
Credit cards followed suit. Where before the concept was confined to an upscale market, Citibank leveled the playing field, changing the entire credit landscape with the launch of Citibank MasterCard and Citibank Visa. Credit cards were finally made more accessible to a greater number of people via friendly payment schemes and lower income requirements.

As the years rolled on, more winning additions came into the roster, like the co-branding efforts of Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa and Shell Citibank MasterCard. These powerful new cards led the way to new forays in niche marketing with Citibank Visa Platinum and Citibank Clear MasterCard.

Anytime, Anywhere Banking

The new millennium ushered in more advancement in technology and service. Citibank launched

Turn to Page 2



citibank 100

To Our Customers, Partners and Friends,

This year marks our 100th anniversary in the Philippines.

Looking back, we marvel at how time has flown, and are filled with gratitude for having been given the privilege to serve you and the Filipino nation.

We had our quiet beginnings in 1902 in the most humble of places – a leased stable along Calle Rosario in Binondo, Manila. From servicing customer accounts, we began financing the nation's first modern hospitals, piers and buildings. Throughout World War II, the 50s, 60s, 70s, and 80s, we have been a committed partner in nation building. In the 90s, we are most proud of having created dynamic products that empowered millions of Filipinos, helping you get ahead in life.

For all that has been, and all that will be, we thank you, most graciously, for giving us the privilege of serving you. Thank you for letting Citibank become a part of your lives.

And now on our 100th year, we welcome the next century with a renewed commitment to continue to be a pillar of stability and world-class services. More than all the fanfare, this is what our 100-year celebration is going to be all about.

Your Citi Never Sleeps...

The Employees of Citibank

100
YEARS IN THE
PHILIPPINES

citibank

CITIBANK

A new look. A renewed commitment to help you get ahead.

We have evolved with you over the past 100 years. Now, we'd like to introduce you to some changes in Citibank. Starting with our new look, you'll see a whole new Citibank that's friendlier and more personal. Plus, you can continue to expect innovative products and services that will suit your specific financial needs and your ever-changing lifestyle -- all designed to help you get ahead.

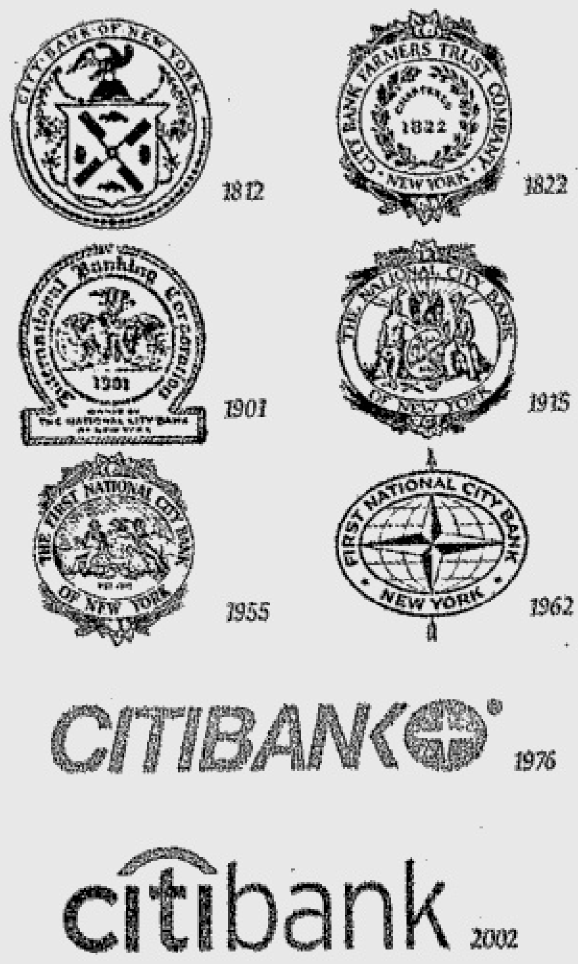
citibank

A member of citigroup

Catch Citibank's New Look

WHO says you can't look new if you're a hundred? On Citibank's 100th year in the Philippines and in Asia, the world's leading financial brand is introducing a new look that's warmer, vibrant and dynamic.

Beginning 18th century, Citibank has been changing its look in keeping with the times.



CITY BANK OF NEW YORK
1812
CITY BANK FARMERS TRUST COMPANY
1822
NEW YORK
International Banking Corporation
1901
1901
THE NATIONAL CITY BANK OF NEW YORK
1915
THE FIRST NATIONAL CITY BANK OF NEW YORK
1955
FIRST NATIONAL CITY BANK
NEW YORK
1962
CITIBANK
1976
citibank
2002

The new look ties it more closely to its parent company, Citigroup. The signature blue wave remains but the compass rose has been replaced with a red arc to reflect the broader product range that Citibank now offers individuals and companies as a Citigroup brand.

In 1998, Citicorp, the parent company of Citibank, merged with Travelers Group and became known as Citigroup, building a new model in financial services which offers more to the customer.

Citigroup today is the world's largest financial services company, with some 190 million customer accounts in more than 100 countries. Citibank is the most recognized brand under the Citigroup umbrella, which also includes CitiFinancial, Primerica, Smith Barney and Travelers.

As a member of Citigroup, Citibank has gained access to new learnings, more experience, more products, and more core competencies.

Citibank Asia Pacific Group Head for Consumer Bank Frits Seegers who was recently in town to kick off the Centennial celebrations and unveil the new look provided the rationale for the change.

"This new brand look more accurately reflects what Citibank has evolved into – a complete financial services company for any individual or corporate," Seegers related.

"The red arc and the new font signal what Citibank is today – a service company with the broadest offering of financial products delivered to customers with convenience, innovation and professionalism. At the same time, it does not detract from the elements of commitment and reliability for which we are known in Asia."

It will be the sixth look for the bank during its 100-year tenure in Asia Pacific, and the eight from when it was founded in 1812. Its most recent look with the compass rose was introduced in 1976.

The new look was developed by Lippincott Design, a brand consultancy firm based in the United States. The development of the new look involved research and testing with customer groups across Asia Pacific, Latin America and Central Europe. It was launched in North America in 2000.

Citibank has consistently been voted one of Asia's leading brands through numerous independent surveys. An opinion survey by Time, Inc. in October 2001 ranked Citibank ahead of all banking finance and insurance companies in Asia in reliability, innovation and in having high quality products and services.

Mi Amore y Favorito Citibank Card

Maurice Arcache reveals and revels in the pleasures of plastic

ALRIGHT *palanggas*, you've heard me trill before about a lot of things. Sure I like my tiramisu fresh and creamy. Yes, I would rather travel than watch TV. It may be too much to ask that the newspaper be ironed (like the butler might in the grand old days of Britain), but if there's one thing I cannot stand living without, more than my tuxedo; more than a flute of champagne, it's, yes, my trusty credit cards (plural, *naturellement*) from Citibank.

I know there are tons of other things people can be in love with. People can feel passionate about Ming vases. Others can wax on about Jaguars or carafes of wine. I myself prefer living in simple elegance, in convenience, in ease and breezy style. I love traveling, just getting up and going, which is why I so adore my Citibank credit cards, every single one of them. All those lovely features and perks (and I won't play favorites because that would be like picking out a favorite dessert – they are all *trés* delectable)! To put it simply: Citibank credit cards always simplify my life. It's the honest truth!

Let's start first with planning parties. Why lug around all sorts of bills, coins, change and cash when your eye-catching little Citibank credit card (the gold glints perfectly against the deep maroon of a Cartier wallet) can take care of paying for items in a breeze? You not only avoid having to hold all that money (heaven knows where its been if it ain't crisp like lechon skin), you're neither booty for some lucky looter or hold-upper.

You can also pay in friendly monthly terms or that super little invention of theirs called PayLite Installment Plan. That alone makes it worthy of top ten, but if you need more reason, let's all be honest for a minute and admit that everyone and anyone has at one point or another gone shopping on impulse. Yes, the shopping attack that hits you in the middle of the afternoon when you know you just have to have that extra pair of patent leathers. Or that nifty perfect little navy jacket. Or that irrepressible bunch of extravagant *inflagrante* flowers for your loved ones.

One of the greatest joys of life is being able to afford sinful pleasures once in a while. Citibank takes you there *dahlings* and back. Without them the malls would be such a lonelier place. Not only would you not be able to see your *amigos* and *amigas* there all the time, you'd feel awful too if you couldn't buy anything on impulse, *n'est pas*?

As for travelling, I don't have to tell you about my trips. You know I use Citibank all over the place. From buying the tickets, to paying for Broadway shows, from shopping for pasalubong, to paying for the perfect cup of *chocolat* while watching the sun descend against the Swiss chalets.

I can go on and on about how wonderful these cards are, but really, I adore my Citibank credit card because they complete the pleasures in my life. Whether it's shopping, dining, traveling, sightseeing or partying, the Citibank credit card is great to have as a *frere, une petite ami*, a super little pal you can count on all the time. And that my *palanggas* is being totally honest about plastic without being plastic.

A hundred...

From Page 1

Online Banking to give credit cardholders and bank clients anytime, anywhere banking access. Simply by visiting *www.citibank.com.ph* a cardholder can inquire on his balance, payment due date and last payment. For bank clients, they can transfer funds, pay bills and check on their account activity.

Riding on the Filipinos' love affair with their cellular phones, Mobile Banking was introduced where clients can send text messages to inquire their balance, load their pre-paid phone and more.

The next century

With Citibank's extraordinary size, resources and technology advantage, more than ever, it has the enormous flexibility of providing the widest array of innovative tailored solutions to cater to each of its client's needs. There is certainly much to look forward to in Citibank's next century in the Philippines.

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On choosing Citibank credit cards

"I'm actually a founder member for Citibank Gold MasterCard so that should say something about my loyalty. One feature I really appreciate with my card is PayLite Installment Plan which comes in handy for both planned and unplanned purchases.

Just recently, our laptop broke down and the most practical option was to get a new one. Unfortunately, we did not set aside any funds for this, and so my husband and I had to think of a solution - fast. Naturally, we turned to my Citibank credit card. To me, it's the thinnest, lightest wallet ever."

Kuku Lopez with son Deirdrou
Vice-President, Alta Productions Group

"Citibank Visa Platinum provides prestige and convenience. Their exclusive benefits, personalized service and privileges offered by their international partners are simply unparalleled."

Raul Nazareno
President, Burger King

"When I heard that Citibank Clear card will entitle me to a 15% discount at Nike Park, I grabbed an application form right away. Now that I have one, the more I use it, the more I realize it's a perfect fit to my lifestyle. It gives me great discounts and freebies at my favorite places. My personal favorite is getting a free upsize on my Starbucks drink at no extra cost.

I also like the fact that I hardly feel I'm paying for a membership fee with the P90 monthly charge. It also doesn't hurt that it has a very attractive design - whenever I take it out of my wallet, friends can't resist borrowing it to check it out for themselves."

Dr. Jonah Aldip
Owner, Dental Gallery

"My work demands a lot of traveling and so I need a card that is accepted almost anywhere. I chose to own a Citibank card - a Citibank Cathay Pacific Gold Visa - because of its unique rewards program designed for frequent travelers like me.

All my spending earns Asia Miles, more than what I would with other credit cards, which I can redeem for free trips or upgrades."

Mary J. Leong
Entrepreneur

"In my line of work, I spend a lot of time on the road, and so when it came to choosing which credit card to apply for - it could only be the Shell-Citibank MasterCard. More than the fuel rebates, I appreciate the 24-hour roadside assistance it guarantees to cardmembers.

In fact, I had the chance to test it the day after I got my credit card. My car broke down and all I had to do was call the number at the back of my card and a tow truck arrived within an hour. With that, they just made me a customer for life."

Douglas Rodriguez
Trade Marketing Associate
San Miguel Corp. Beer Division

"Who doesn't like being rewarded? And if it's for your shopping, then that's really icing on the cake. Thanks to my Citibank Gold MasterCard, I have been rewarded with an array of items - from a meat tenderizer to a Sony 14" television. Now, I'm eyeing a grass trimmer for my garden.

While most credit cards now offer a Rewards program, Citibank still gives you the best deals. I guess being the first to introduce it, they enjoy a good headstart over the competition. Rewards points have no expiration dates so you can take as long as you want redeeming the item of your choice. Plus, it's free delivery so you're not inconvenienced by having to personally pick up the item and there's a fast track option where you add a bit of cash if you're points are not enough and you can't wait."

Cristina Mendoza
Garments Exporter

"I've had my Citibank credit card for some time and when Citibank Online Banking was launched back in 2000, I got hooked. Since then, I've never been late with paying my bills even when I'm traveling.

When Citibank Mobile Banking was introduced late last year, I signed up right away. And recently, when the bank started offering electronic statements, I was again one of the first in line.

As Business Development Manager for Regus, I'm always on the go - locally and internationally. By opening up these remote channels, Citibank has made life so much easier for me."

Trixie Syling
Regus Instant Offices Worldwide

"Shopping becomes a more pleasurable experience when I use my Citibank Gold cards. The Gold Exclusives program ensures I get discounts and privileges from the stores without even having to ask.

As a bank customer, I also enjoy the convenience of paying my bills through telephone. These, plus the fact that I never have a problem with using the card at any store here and abroad have made me a loyal customer since 1994."

Patricia Zamora-Riingen with daughter Tracy
Managing Partner, Dome Café

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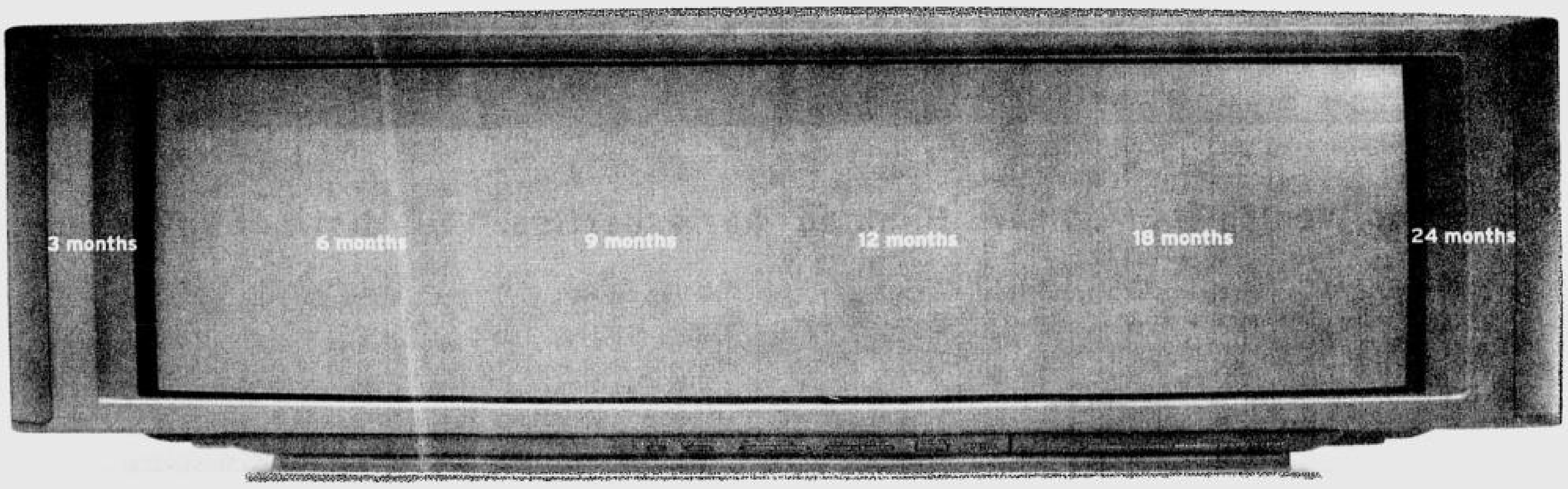

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Ben Chan
CEO & Creative Director
Bench, Human, Dimensioné
CitiGold Customer

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At CitiGold Wealth Management Banking, we understand how important it is for you to dedicate time towards pursuing your career and personal aspirations. And yet the wealth you've accumulated deserves to be well taken care of.

Which is why we believe you'll appreciate what our expertise can do for your wealth. And more importantly, how it can free up your time to allow you to pursue your individual goals.

Ben Chan, a successful businessman says this about CitiGold, "Only CitiGold's Wealth Planner helps me understand my finances as well as I understand my customers. It has taken my wealth to new heights, in the same way that I've expanded my little clothing store into a fashion and lifestyle shop that's at par with the world's best."

With CitiGold Wealth Management Banking, you'll have a distinct advantage when it comes to managing your wealth.

CitiGold Wealth Planner

The CitiGold Wealth Planner is a proprietary software exclusive to CitiGold customers. Based on a detailed assessment process, it will help you create a personalized financial plan based on your investible assets, investment objectives and risk profile, taking your wealth to new heights.

Portfolio Review

Anyone can tell you what to invest in. But only CitiGold Wealth Management Banking gives you a review of your portfolio on an on-going basis. Our portfolio review process means you'll receive periodic statements plus regular sessions with your CitiGold Relationship Manager. That will keep you constantly in touch with the market situation, allowing you to match product solutions to your financial needs.

Team of Experts

We recognize that your needs go beyond simple cash management. Therefore you will not only have a designated CitiGold Relationship Manager, but also access to an Investment Consultant to help you select among a global array of services; a CitiGold Associate to facilitate banking transactions; and a CitiGold Phone Executive on call 24 hours a day, so you can bank anytime, anywhere. Having the right team behind you can help you make more informed investment decisions.

Become a CitiGold Wealth Management Banking Customer today.

To enjoy the distinct advantage of CitiGold Wealth Management Banking, simply open an account with a minimum sum of US$100,000 (or its peso equivalent).

Call us at (632) 894-7631 and schedule a Wealth Planning session today.

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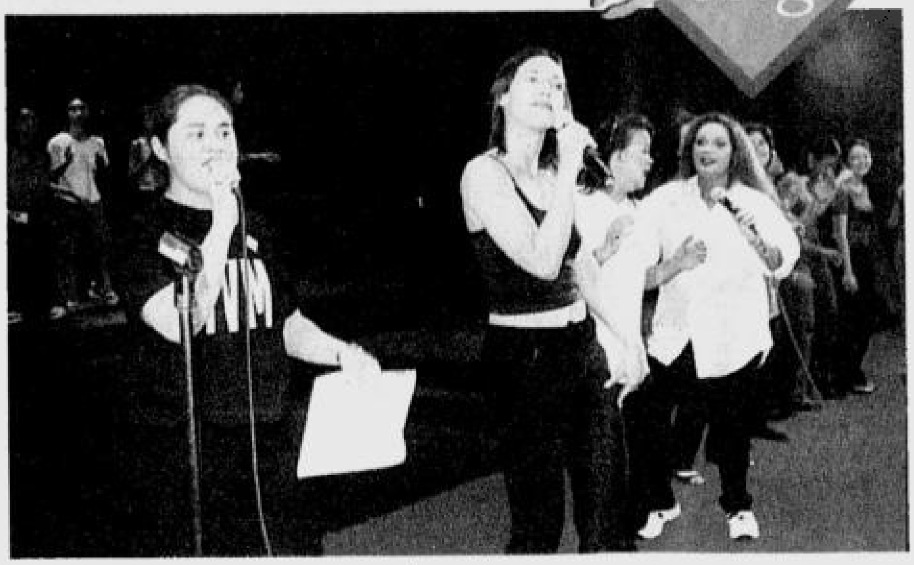

Backstage with some of the country's most interesting vaginas

MONIQUE Wilson, Lynn Sherman, Malou de Guzman and Leah Navarro

A spree of vulvas

By Alya B. Honasan
Photos by Cheche Lazaro

THE INVITATION from Monique Wilson to join the V-Day Philippines "Vagina Monologues" shebang, "Kababaihan," was a tremendous honor; I don't think any woman worth her labia could possibly refuse such a call, unless there were previous important engagements (and I don't mean a pap smear, either).

I knew this was serious when I showed up for the press conference and there were more people on the artists' table than the audience. It was absolutely delightful to hear Sr. Mary John Mananzan talk about her vagina, and I marveled at how the girls at St. Scholastica's are getting some very enlightened guidance. I felt smug satisfaction that my own alma mater was just as cool, what would turn out to be a short-lived sentiment (more on the Dark Ages and words that "grate on the ear" later). It was particularly sad to hear that Monique's indefatigable mom Teri Wilson would be too sick to see it all live, and touching to see Bibot Amador give Monique a hug and tell her, "I'm so proud of you." All's fair in love and art, indeed.

Rehearsal

On rehearsal day, call time was 6 p.m., and we arrived nervously clutching copies of our scripts. To-

A SPREE/ p.D2

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And God created Eve

Herself abused by her father, the author of the 'Monologues' says she's not a male-basher, but a recorder of the painful realities women have suffered through centuries

By Cora Llamas
Contributor

HOW could such a lady who has seen and heard so much of the abuse and suffering of her fellow women remain as fiery and committed to the cause of women's rights, without losing genuine sense of compassion or numbing her heart against the horrors, if only in instinctive self-protection?

It was the foremost question in my mind about Eve Ensler, award-winning playwright of the controversial, critically acclaimed "The Vagina Monologues" ("TVM"), a no-holds-barred baring of women's hearts and souls that made audiences all over the world, male and female, alternately weep and laugh. Far from being an armchair advocate, this writer has devoted her life to the empowerment of women. Every year, "TVM" becomes a catalyst for V-Day, an annual international event consisting of artistic and theatrical events that aims to increase awareness of violence against women and raise funds for organizations supporting and rehabilitating the victims.

Since Ensler launched it in 1998, V-Day has grown to a global movement that was celebrated in 800 venues around the world this year alone.

In a recent presscon in Manila, which she proudly and warmly claimed as a "vagina holiday zone," Ensler revealed why it ultimately became impossible for her to remain a detached writer. "I was performing 'TVM' in little venues in Jerusalem, Zagreb, Croatia and Oklahoma. After each show, women would line up to tell me how they were beaten and raped. I would have a breakdown. I couldn't perform the piece because I felt responsible." She felt like a "war photographer taking pictures of people who are being murdered and doesn't intervene on their behalf."

ENSLER with Monique Wilson PHOTO: CHECHE LAZARO

Everywhere

The immensely well-traveled author said that the oppression of women, in one form or another, can be found everywhere, from the war zones of Bosnia, Afghanistan and Israel to the luxurious salons of Beverly Hills, such as the genital mutilation inflicted on two million girls worldwide every year, preventing these future ladies from ever experiencing sexual pleasure; the rape and domestic violence inflicted on Native American women whose residence in conservations place them outside the protection of the US Constitution; the propensity of affluent women of the West to tighten their vagina for cosmetic reasons, apparently to become more attractive to their men. Ensler could expound on these topics without missing a beat.

Long before her government launched an assault against the Taliban, Ensler had been trying to call attention to the repressiveness of the fanatical Islamic movement. Months anonymously spent under the *burka* in great risk to her life gave Ensler a first-hand account of the living hell Afghan women under that regime endured. Her dramatization of it is one of the most disturbing, horrific pieces in the new "Monologues."

She moved as fast as she could talk. The day after V-Day, Monique Wilson and Rosanna Abueva of the New Voice Company shuttled her, partner Ariel Jordan, and their TV crew to different parts of the city for a series of interviews with comfort women of World War II, leaders of NGOs fighting for women's rights and college girls just coping with their new-found sexuality. I only had less an hour to catch her as our van moved around. But it was more than enough to get a deeper glimpse of Eve Ensler.

Life-changing opportunity

In every V-Day that she attends, Ensler makes it a point to ask women who have been abused to stand up. The act presents a life-changing opportunity to break the barriers of silence that have made their continuous oppression possible.

"These women walk around feeling guilty, thinking the whole thing was their fault. In some V-Days, those who didn't stand up would write us later saying that they were ashamed. In Bulgaria, when I made the call, only one—an American woman—stood up.

"People are reluctant to talk about what's going on. Raped women take the shame upon themselves. But 80 percent of the solution comes from standing up and saying that they didn't do it to themselves and then free themselves of the shame."

EVE Ensler PHOTO: BETOY JOHNSON

Ensler freed herself years ago when she told her mother openly about the sexual abuse and violence she suffered from her late father. The older man had raped her from the ages of 5-10, and then habitually beat her until the age of 16. Though she would soon fly the coop as an adult to pursue her own life, Ensler said that total liberation came only when she reached her 30s.

"The abuse damages the relationship with your parents forever. They turn you into something else," she admitted with an easy candor that comes only from the certainty that the battle has long been won. "I didn't get out of it until I started talking about it. It was how I rose from the ashes. I confronted my mother and told her what my father had been doing. 'I'm not here to convince you or prove anything to you. These are the facts.' At that moment, my entire life changed. I went from a depressed, self-hating person to a free one. I don't have any grudge against my father and mother. I've freed them.'"

At first, her mother denied knowledge of her husband's sexual abuse. A week later, she called her daughter weeping in broken admission, "I sacrificed you. I made the decision that the violence of poverty was deadlier than the violence of what your father was doing against you." Ensler's mother, a half native American who had grown up poor and deprived, was afraid that a showdown would cut the family off from his financial support.

Her story

Her own history of sexual violence and victory over it ("I'm not a victim") strengthens and enables Ensler to empathize with women undergoing the same thing. While poverty and suffering can warp some psyches, they can also bring out a sensitive spirit and compassionate heart in others.

Her journeys through the years made her realize one thing. "People who have the least are the most connected to the truth because they have nothing else. I've seen it in prisons, refugee damps, homeless shelters. All they have is themselves, their hearts and spirits. That's the only thing can they offer."

An unforgettable encounter in Bosnia showed her the two polar opposites that human beings are capable of: utter insensitivity and selfless generosity.

"There had been a safe enclave where 10,000 Serbs came and killed the men and left the women. A call was issued for the women to come and find where their sons, brothers, husbands, were. Forty thousand women rode buses and trains to go to these stadiums. It was a torturous ride where the roads were blown to bits. In the stadiums, I understood Greek tragedy for the first time in my life. Every single woman in them has lost every single man in her life. There was suddenly a lot of [deep, gut-level] wailing [of a kind which you've never heard before]. The international organizers ignored the wailing and started to show videos—of the town before the war, then of the Serbs taking these women's husbands away. The organizers had wanted to educate the international community. But the women went insane and started screaming. It was a nightmare. On the way home, the women were weeping.

"We passed by a little town and went through the backyard of what was once a Serbian house. As we were leaving, one woman ran after us and gave us an egg. That egg could have been her family's meal for days. I took it in my hand and cried all the way back. You can't return it because she'd feel insulted. That woman had nothing materially. But all she had was her heart and her ability to feel love and be generous. I have seen that [selflessness] in every single [poor] place I've been through.

"But where people have everything, they live like pigs. They can't have enough."

Safe world

Class and social disparities aside, Ensler dreams of and continues to build "a world where women are safe and free and men are tender and vulnerable." Dismissing allegations of male-bashing, she laughingly pointed out she "loves men" and are surrounded by "vagina-loving" males. Her adult son is actively involved in supporting poor Native American women, while her longtime partner, psychotherapist Jordan, "fights violence against women in his own way."

One thing that did alarm her was the "macho imperialistic patriarch reality" that the Bush administration was so quick to show in the aftermath of the WTC terrorist attack. "New York is my city and the terrorist attack left a huge hole in my country and my life. But I don't think it's a good idea to support the Northern Alliance because they're warlords who don't have a good history. For a while, I felt so ashamed and I thought of getting out of [America].

"But I realized that I have a responsibility to the place where I was born. And that I have to transform its consciousness."

Her form of theater certainly does this. As the foreword in her new play, "Necessary Targets," describes it: "to experience what we experience, to see what's in front of us, to allow the truth in, with all its sorrow and brutality, because in the theater we are not alone in our worried and stained beds. We are there, for these moments together, joined by what we see and hear, made stronger, hopefully, by what opens us."

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The Sansó monologues

By Sansó
Contributor

HOW refreshing to lift the fig leaf and allow "la Bocca della Verita" to speak in public, as was the case with this bas-relief from ancient Rome where it was an oracle. And how charming to see how life's coincidences may be funnier than fiction.

First of all, the authoress has a name, Eve, that bespeaks of the origins of mankind in biblical terms. Then, considering the amount of titillation this organ (the vagina in capital letters) will obtain, solicit and playfully share, it is most fitting that it be presented in the realm of Playtime.

Further, the INQUIRER interview is conducted by the "staff" which, according to my dictionary, is "a stick or club carried for support or combat; supporting pole, a symbol of office; as a flagstaff, as a baton or mace..."—in so many ways evocative of the penis! Oh, and there is also the "staff of life," "bread" (being considered as man's fundamental food), atbp.

The vagina and the penis interlocking, how ideal! To add a bit of spice in this extravaganza, I dare say that I, being a painter, am particularly elated to know that "brush" in Italian, *penello*, comes from—guess—"penis," considered thus the secondary penis or lesser appendage; from the root were derived *pincel* in Spanish and *pinceau* in French. We have here a sinless gratification ("masturbation," in case I be accused of prudery) for male painters and, perhaps, a less innocent activity for our dear lady artists.

Before I get the slings and arrows of fate projected at me for my insolence, may I add that this is in no way done to chide or belittle our lady friends, but just to titillate their "sense of humor" and keep the score efficiently. And let's not forget that even males have a pair of tits. So, tits for tat!

How delightful to find in your Feb. 10 issue the " 'V' Monologues" (I didn't say "vagina" out of respect for a private affair) so aptly expressed by your three virtuosos of free language.

But it was nothing new. In the 18th century, there had already been Diderot's "Les Bijoux Indiscrets" wherein the lady's "*pudenda*" had a mind of its own, differing from the lips one generally sees (except in Afghanistan) and hears: Let's be daring and say that their vaginas often contradicted what the upper mouths expressed so prudently, so prudishly, in the France of that period. The shock was that they thought aloud... oh, *mon Dieu*!

Pre-9/11

With friends, I went to the "Monologues" in New York a few days before NYC lost its two front teeth on Sept. 11. For greater love we went as a group. Actually, we were several couples who had quite a wide experience in theater and free-thinking in sexual matters. Truly, very few things could and did shock us except, perhaps, only the commercialism that we felt the minute we disconnected ourselves from the one-joke "play" that was being presented as theater.

So many of the play's incidents and details go on to probe, question or dig into today's reality to find out the obvious: That nature has been unkind to women in their reproductive system. But let me underline: Through not the least fault of the male. We were talking about nature itself with no skirting of the physical obstacles women are born with: Virginity, loss of virginity, menstruation, gestation, childbirth, through all kinds of Pap smears and local irritations, on to menopause and osteoporosis... *Hindi kasalanan ng barako iyan*!

I must add at this point that we went as a sporting group ready for all kinds of verbal exchanges between the ladies and the gentlemen, but I suggested, and ob-

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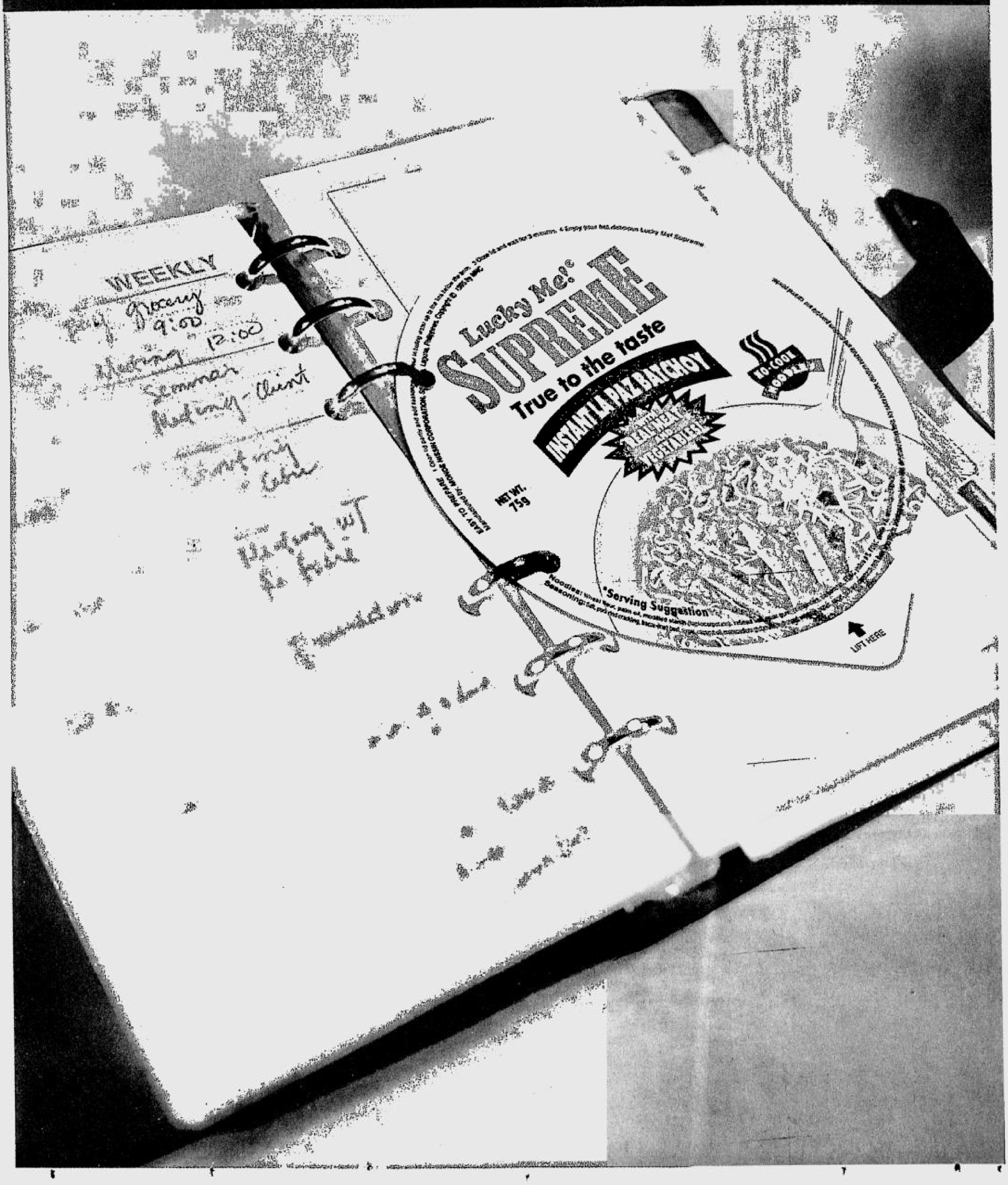

> On Women's Day we should all get together and stop singing, 'We've come a long way, baby,' but rather, 'Hey, we've got a long way to go!' Men would then feel less in danger of extinction through male-bashing

tained, that the males don't make the slightest remark during the performance; in exchange we would all go to supper and then the ladies would lend the gents full attention, without the most minimal remark, for as long as we had something to say about the "*kuwan*" we had seen and heard on the stage and then some... moans and all! If they broke the pact they would pay for the dinner. Agreed.

Just like those couples in some ancient opus like Boccaccio's "Decameron" or Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" where they were blocked in some convent by the Black Death and, after charades, and the usual games, came the rules of strategies and constraints trying to outwit the other group.

After the 'Vaggies,' the veggies

In the restaurant, other people sensed soon enough that something exceptional was happening, for the girls were totally mute as we just went on discussing the elements of the "Monologues." They started listening and kept quiet, too.

So the male point of view came clearer as we went along with all kinds of questions on the basic issues: The dualism and division between what the "hammer" can ever be able to feel and know for sure about the "anvil," and vice-versa.

Among other things we found out, of course, was that the long scene of the moans was repetitious, sensational and gratuitous (men moan, too, if not more). So much of the "play" hovers between the actions that appear on the surface, in the world, and the hidden, secret thoughts inside. We never for a moment thought the author had any of the searing wit of Diderot's "Bijoux" in point-counterparts and intertwining levels of comprehension, let alone Boccacio's or Chaucer's.

Magical

But thanks to the "Vagina Monologues," we discovered something that evening truly magical, something that men had taken for granted for so long. The "Monologues" gave us the élan to look at ourselves in a new light and examine the fabulous male sexual mechanism that has so few drawbacks, except maybe some temporary "failures," yes! Everyone has had them.

But we realize that they should not be any more "shameful" than when our ladies have their "periods." Nature made it that way. There are days when *we* have our "periods," too, or some such thing. Eventually we are going to encounter a total "deafness" toward sex, but that is far, far away... *mañana*! Men are just people—all functions have some dysfunctions; it's all part of being alive.

Erections and the object itself, the penis, are a splendid concatenation of causes and effects. They make one wonder why they ever work. So much has been written about who has the greater pleasure in mating, men or women, but it will remain forever a question mark as both genders experience 100 percent their sensations within themselves. Who can judge?

Sexperts count the nerve-ends of the clitoris and compare them, like serious accountants, with the glans, as if these were quantifiable, with a bottom line and future dusty archives. Masters and Johnson realized they had to be a male-female (or female-male) team to make acceptable observations.

We recounted reading articles in ladies' magazines on how to make men go crazy in bed... Ouch! One says, for example, to grasp the male member as if it were a tennis racquet... *Aray po*! How romantic *naman*! Beware of the Williams sisters!

Our girls showed great strength and will power in not walking out as we slipped into Lolo Freud's realm of the "penis envy"... or organic wishful-thinking... *Naku po*! What self-control *sila*!

Take that, YSL

Our male instincts brought out some observations that are omitted in fashionable glossy ladies' magazines, by some kind of collective amnesia. The older members (!) recalled that way back our mothers wore trousers but, not wanting to imitate men, they had their openings on the side.

A capital revelation comes with the modern frontal zipper, but, we added cruelly, the zipper does not create the organ! We had the house rocking. Will our gals ever go back to not imitating slavishly men's apparel? Yves Saint Laurent, swallow that.

In my prologue, I said "Eve" was an "authoress" purposely for I venerate the achievement of women and I wish they were given more credit for their creations. Truly, truly, the list we offered was short if we considered all that had been created by men in practically all the fields of inventive cognition, *'di ba*?

We suggested that, on Women's Day, we all get together and stop singing "We've come a long way, baby," but rather, "Hey, we've got a long way to go!" Men would then make it easier for aspiring females since they would feel less in danger of extinction through male-bashing.

As an example of male-bashing, I remember now how one of these newspaper columnists said: "Jokingly [somebody said] that all great painters and chefs had been men. That may be so, I countered, but with sperm banks, men are being rendered obsolete, except for the fun potential."

We have read the latest articles by Doris Lessing adamantly warning women against male-bashing, although she was one of the strongest and loudest feminist some years back. Let's play an even-handed game, please! *Aray po*!

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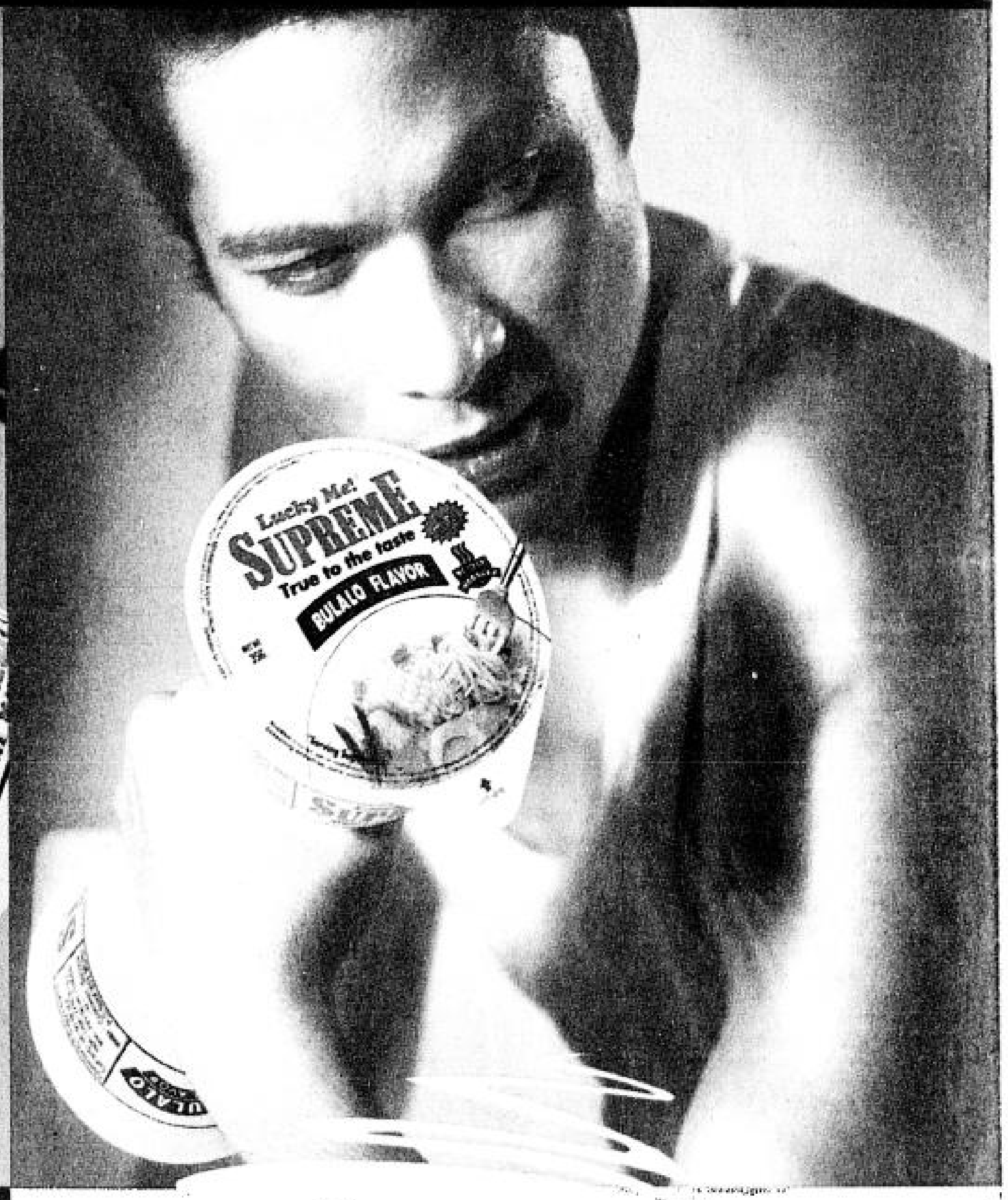

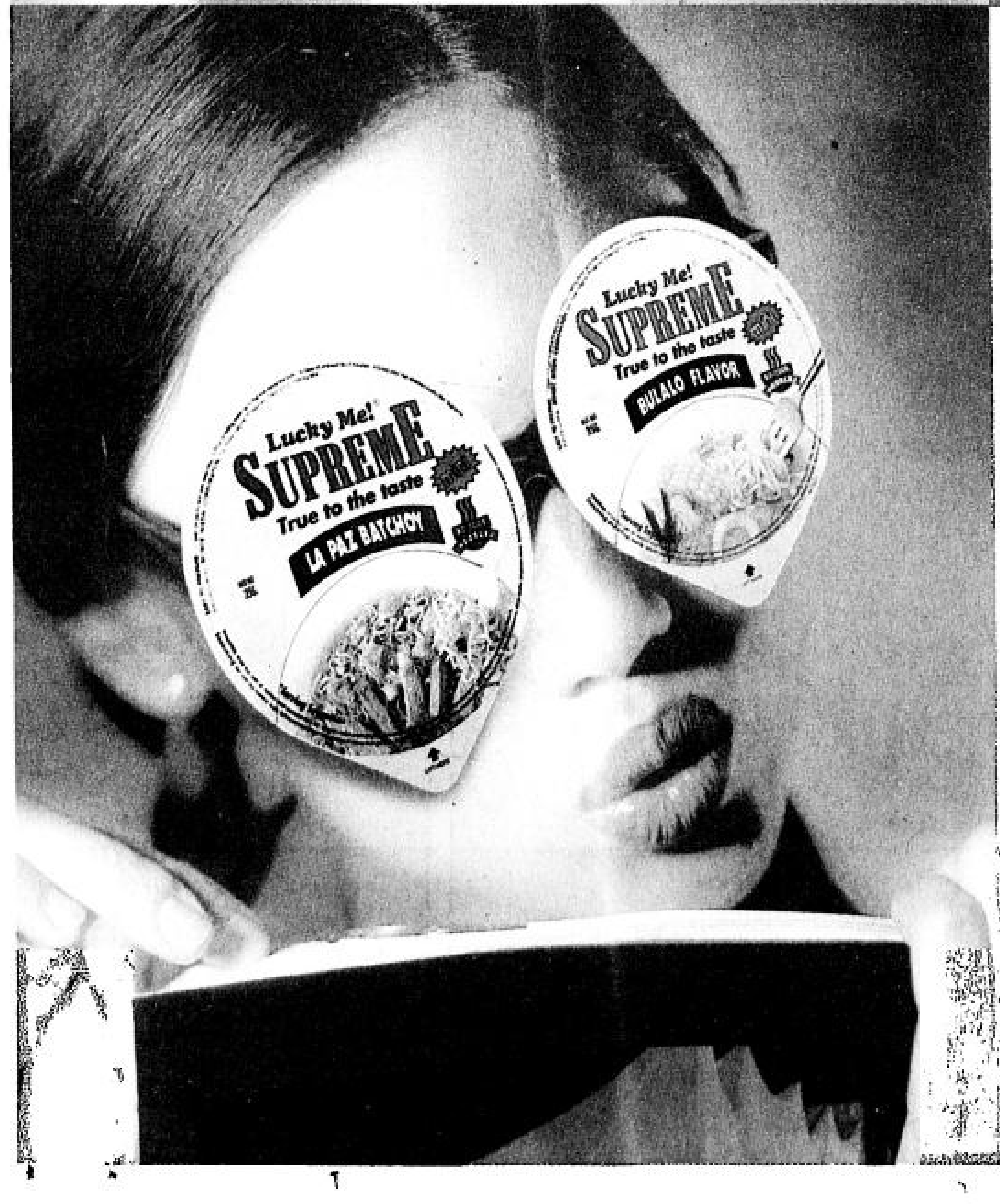

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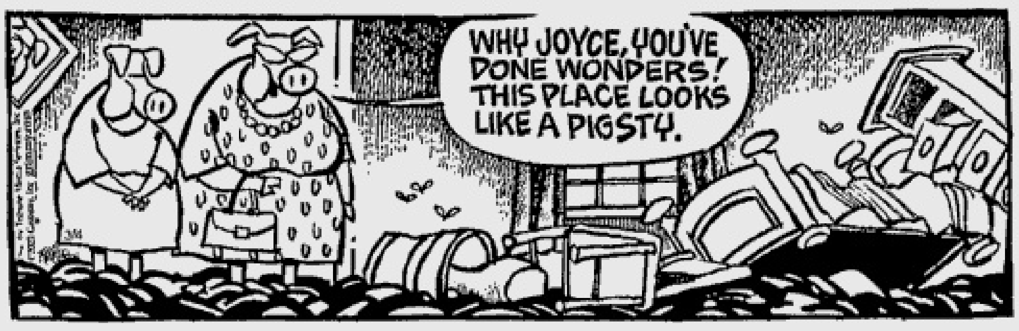
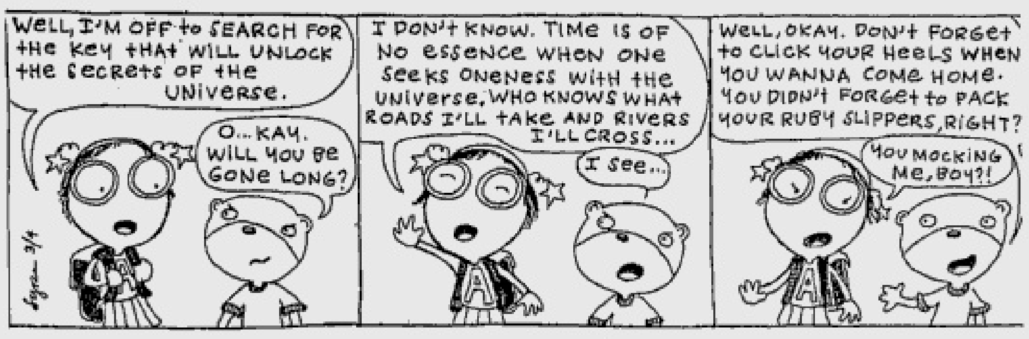
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


WHY JOYCE, YOU'VE DONE WONDERS! THIS PLACE LOOKS LIKE A PIGSTY.

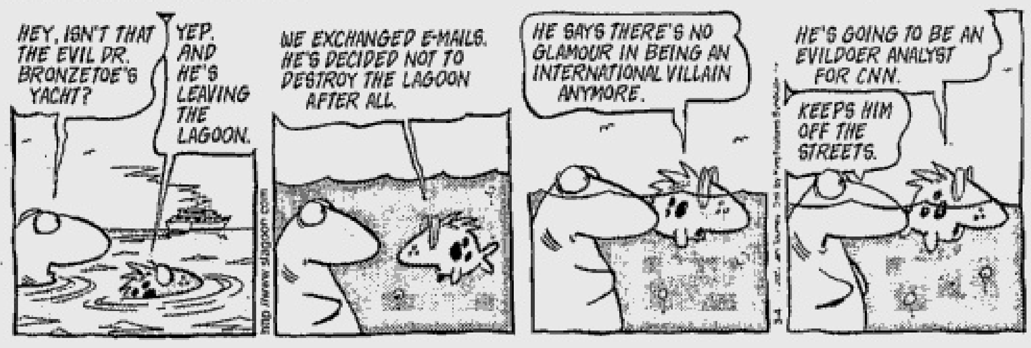
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WELL, I'M OFF TO SEARCH FOR THE KEY THAT WILL UNLOCK THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE.
O...KAY. WILL YOU BE GONE LONG?
I DON'T KNOW. TIME IS OF NO ESSENCE WHEN ONE SEEKS ONENESS WITH THE UNIVERSE. WHO KNOWS WHAT ROADS I'LL TAKE AND RIVERS I'LL CROSS...
I SEE...
WELL, OKAY. DON'T FORGET TO CLICK YOUR HEELS WHEN YOU WANNA COME HOME. YOU DIDN'T FORGET TO PACK YOUR RUBY SLIPPERS, RIGHT?
YOU MOCKING ME, BOY?!

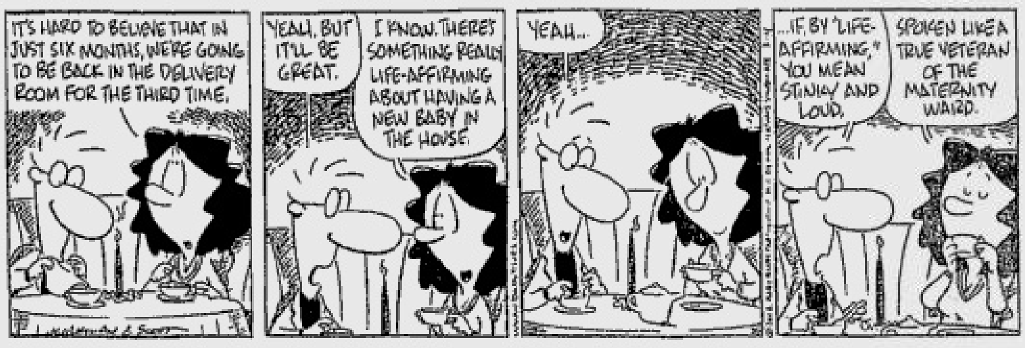
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


HEY, ISN'T THAT THE EVIL DR. BRONZETOE'S YACHT?
YEP. AND HE'S LEAVING THE LAGOON.
WE EXCHANGED E-MAILS. HE'S DECIDED NOT TO DESTROY THE LAGOON AFTER ALL.
HE SAYS THERE'S NO GLAMOUR IN BEING AN INTERNATIONAL VILLAIN ANYMORE.
HE'S GOING TO BE AN EVILDOER ANALYST FOR CNN.
KEEPS HIM OFF THE STREETS.
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT IN JUST SIX MONTHS, WE'RE GOING TO BE BACK IN THE DELIVERY ROOM FOR THE THIRD TIME.
YEAH, BUT IT'LL BE GREAT.
I KNOW. THERE'S SOMETHING REALLY LIFE-AFFIRMING ABOUT HAVING A NEW BABY IN THE HOUSE.
YEAH...
...IF, BY "LIFE-AFFIRMING," YOU MEAN STINKY AND LOUD.
SPOKEN LIKE A TRUE VETERAN OF THE MATERNITY WARD.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jason Newsted, Chastity Bono, Emilio Estefan, Kay Lenz, Patsy Kensit

Happy Birthday: You will be lucky in business and insightful in the way you approach life and take care of yourself this year. You'll be focused and capable of following through on long-range goals in order to reach the success that will bring you happiness. Your numbers are 10, 13, 24, 32, 37, 39

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Take this opportunity to start renovations, invest in property, open your doors to friends and family or just enjoy the comforts of your home. Investments look promising .

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Do what you do best today and you will get ahead. You may find that issues regarding a partnership may be a little unsettled. Stay calm and listen to what others have to say.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You may find yourself in the middle of a situation regarding peers or colleagues that will enable you to move into a leadership position. Let your ideas be known .

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Be prepared to do something a little out of the ordinary. You can't sit at home all of the time so get out and enjoy some entertaining activity that you can do with friends.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You may have a problem at home today. If something isn't working properly or someone is being difficult to get along with, try to fix the problem.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Mingle, network, but most of all, communicate today. You will have plenty to contribute to any situation you get involved in. Your motor skills and detailed work will be perfect.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You will impress everyone who is watching what you are doing and you will be praised for your ability to take action and get things done.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You may be a little uptight today if you don't take a deep breath and lighten up. This isn't a good time to try to deal with emotional matters.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Expect the unexpected and prepare to deal with whatever comes your way. Hidden secrets may surface that could lead to a sticky situation. Prepare to do some damage control and eliminate any hassle that could develop.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You have plenty to offer and lots of support around you. Stand up and be counted and you will make a difference today. Partnerships can develop if you do a little networking.

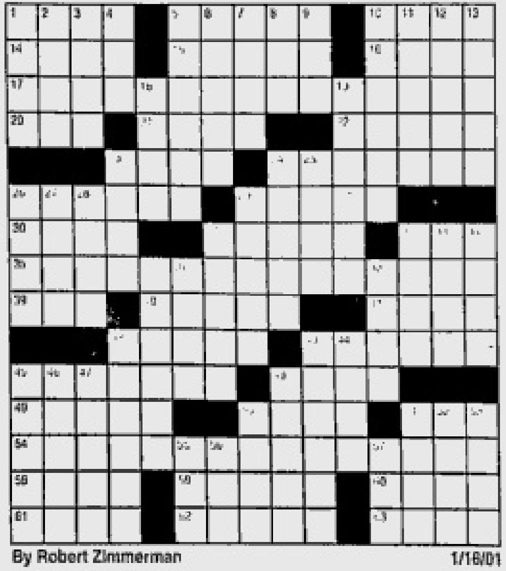
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't get all emotional and upset about your work. Don't count on anyone else to do your job for you. Laziness will only create more problems.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You should be looking for an unusual pastime or perhaps getting involved in a discussion or group that has different outlooks or philosophies. Your creative and understanding approach to all that you do today will attract new friendships.

Birthday Baby: You are lovable, sweet and sensitive. Right from day one, you know how to get your own way. You have a magical way of captivating the hearts of those you meet.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Robert Zimmerman
San Diego, CA

1/16/01

ACROSS

1 Jute
5 Vote in
10 S.F. underground
14 Home of the Bruins
15 Mount of Moses
16 Burn soother
17 V
20 Giant's last word?
21 Greasy-spoon sign
22 Washer cycle
23 Dugout stack
24 Comic Buddy
26 Vial
29 Fellas
30 Man from Tarsus
31 Raccoon's cousin
32 Sidekick
35 V
39 Carpet texture
40 Actress Taylor
41 S. African settler
42 More prudent
43 Scanty
45 Noblewoman
48 Railroad branch line
49 Madison Ave. pros
50 Glance over
51 E in Morse code
54 V
58 Move downward
59 1996 Geoffrey Rush movie
60 A single time
61 Scrimmage anchors
62 Addlebrained
63 Inarticulate grunts

DOWN

1 Shine
2 Legal action grp.
3 Willowy
4 Playground pastime
5 Will contents
6 Elevates
7 Son of Seth
8 Automobile
9 "Edward Scissorhands" director Burton
10 Dyed fabrics
11 Shape of fashion
12 Perch
13 Principle
18 Get well
19 Peary's milieu
23 Rhizome
24 Lift and toss
25 Dote lead-in?
26 Org.
27 Yucatan native
28 Low-cut shoe
29 Errand boy
31 Traffic diverters
32 In need
33 Militant deity
34 Orpheus' instrument
36 East
37 Minus
38 Skier's transport
42 Inflicts
43 "The Usual Suspects" Oscar winner
44 Antisocial music genre
45 Out-of-date
46 Dickens' Drood
47 Edit
48 Odor
50 Fit of pique
51 Half a peal?
52 Ruler's division
53 Golf shop giveaways
55 6th sense
56 Fraternity letter
57 Costello or Rawls

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

T	A	M	E	D	■	O	L	G	A	■	S	T	E	M
O	P	I	N	E	■	B	E	E	N	■	N	A	R	Y
T	E	T	O	N	■	R	A	N	T	■	O	M	I	T
■	■	■	S	T	R	I	K	E	I	T	R	I	C	H
O	S	S	■	A	B	E	■	■	■	A	T	L	A	S
S	P	L	I	T	I	N	H	A	L	F	■	■	■	■
S	A	U	C	E	■	■	O	R	A	T	I	O	N	S
I	N	R	E	■	E	R	N	S	T	■	S	T	E	W
E	S	P	R	E	S	S	O	■	■	C	L	A	R	E
■	■	■	■	S	P	A	R	E	T	H	E	R	O	D
A	R	I	E	S	■	■	■	V	I	E	■	U	S	E
G	U	T	T	E	R	S	N	I	P	E	S	■	■	■
A	M	A	H	■	A	L	E	C	■	T	A	B	L	E
P	O	L	L	■	C	O	O	T	■	A	G	A	I	N
E	R	O	S	■	Y	E	N	S	■	H	A	T	E	D

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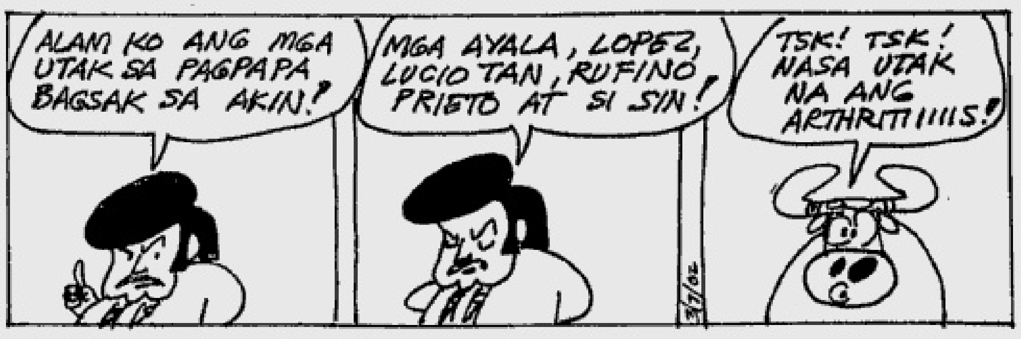
1/16/00

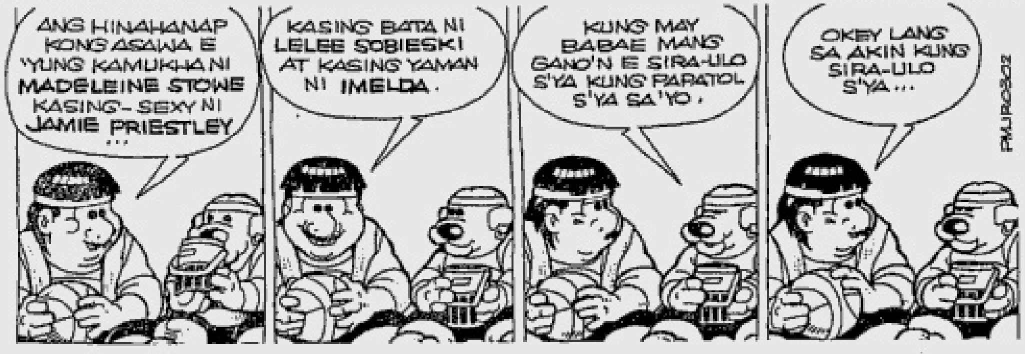
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ALAM KO ANG MGA UTAK SA PAGPAPA BAGSAK SA AKIN!
MGA AYALA, LOPEZ, LUCIO TAN, RUFINO PRIETO AT SI SIN!
TSK! TSK! NASA UTAK NA ANG ARTHRITIIIIIS!
3/7/02

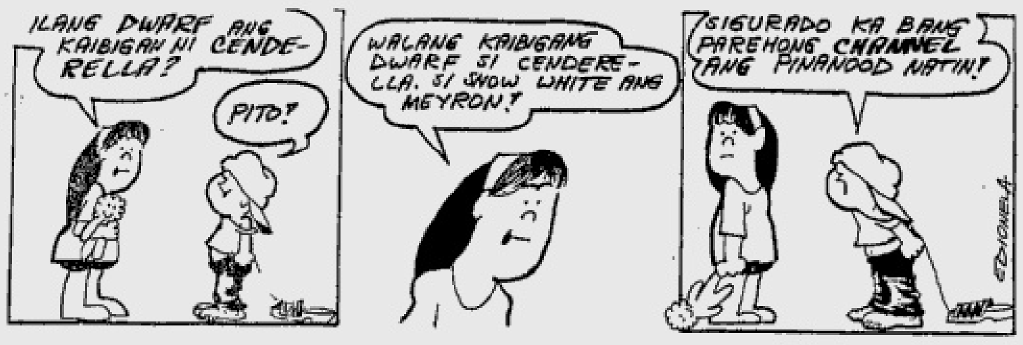
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANG HINAHANAP KONG ASAWA E 'YUNG KAMUKHA NI MADELEINE STOWE KASING-SEXY NI JAMIE PRIESTLEY ...
KASING BATA NI LELEE SOBIESKI AT KASING YAMAN NI IMELDA.
KUNG MAY BABAE MANG GANO'N E SIRA-ULO S'YA KUNG PAPATOL S'YA SA'YO.
OKEY LANG SA AKIN KUNG SIRA-ULO S'YA...
PMJR0302

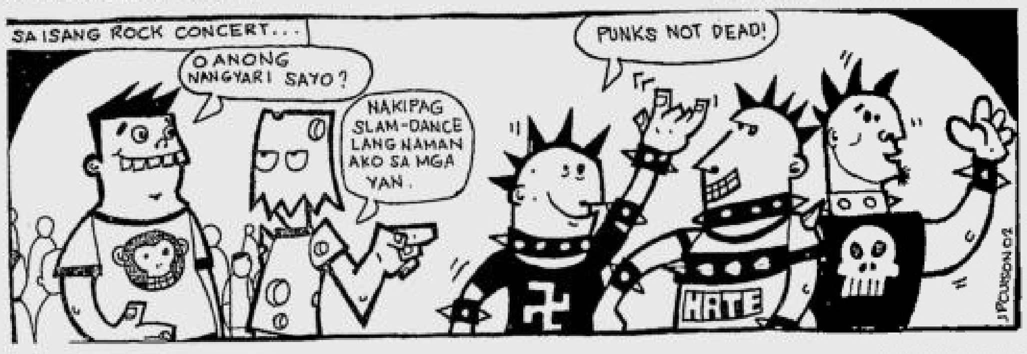
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


ILANG DWARF ANG KAIBIGAN NI CENDERELLA?
PITO!
WALANG KAIBIGANG DWARF SI CENDERELLA. SI SNOW WHITE ANG MEYRON!
SIGURADO KA BANG PAREHONG CHANNEL ANG PINANOOD NATIN?
EDIONELA

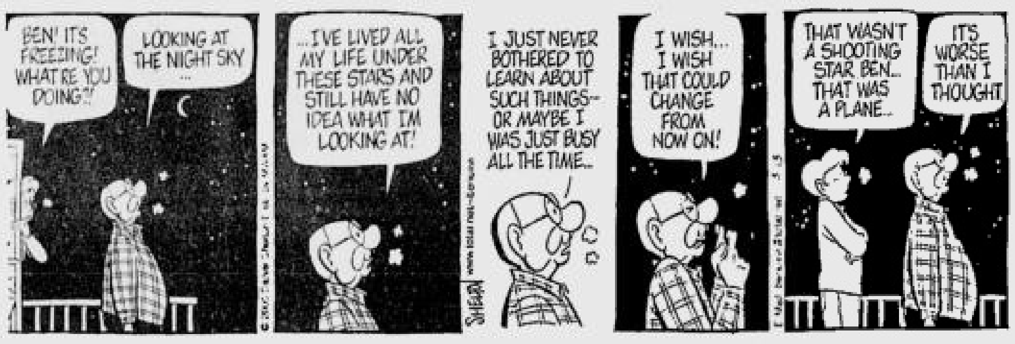
GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL CUISON


SA ISANG ROCK CONCERT...
O ANONG NANGYARI SAYO?
NAKIPAG SLAM-DANCE LANG NAMAN AKO SA MGA YAN.
PUNKS NOT DEAD!
HATE
JPCUISON02

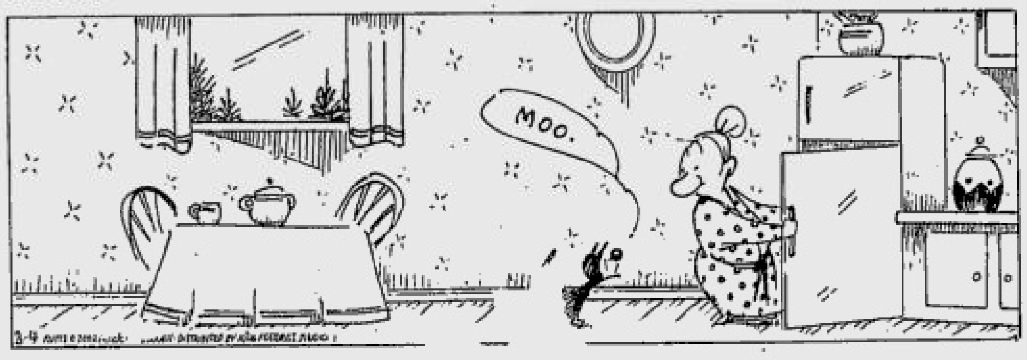
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BEN! IT'S FREEZING! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
LOOKING AT THE NIGHT SKY ...
...I'VE LIVED ALL MY LIFE UNDER THESE STARS AND STILL HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'M LOOKING AT!
I JUST NEVER BOTHERED TO LEARN ABOUT SUCH THINGS-- OR MAYBE I WAS JUST BUSY ALL THE TIME...
I WISH... I WISH THAT COULD CHANGE FROM NOW ON!
THAT WASN'T A SHOOTING STAR BEN... THAT WAS A PLANE...
IT'S WORSE THAN I THOUGHT.

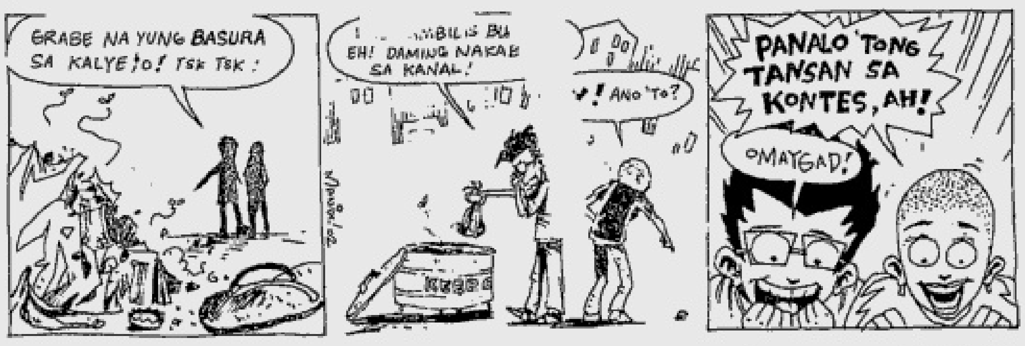
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



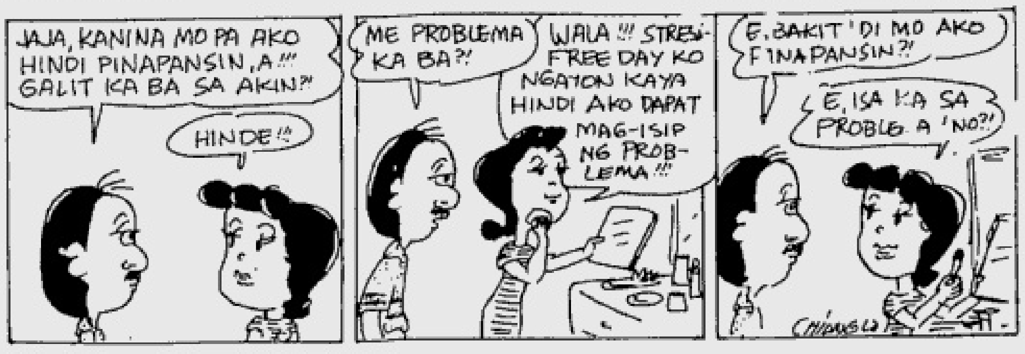
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


GRABE NA YUNG BASURA SA KALYE 'TO! TSK TSK!
EH! DAMING NAKAB SA KANAL!
! ANO 'TO?
PANALO 'TONG TANSAN SA KONTES, AH!
OMAYGAD!

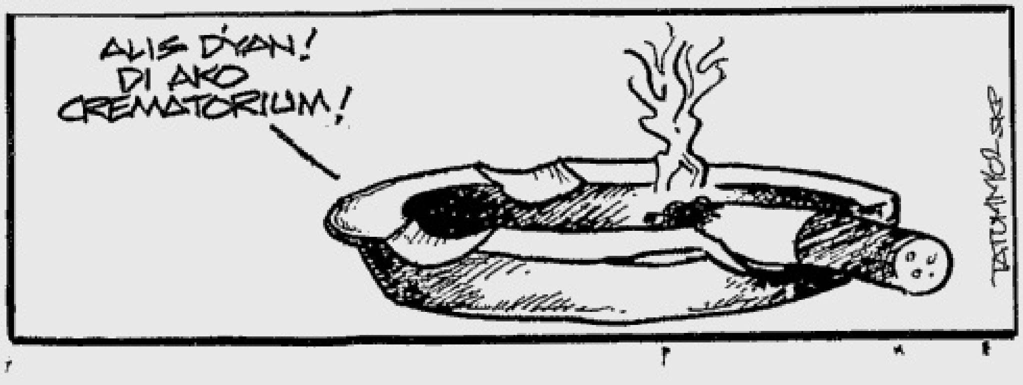
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, KANINA MO PA AKO HINDI PINAPANSIN, A!!! GALIT KA BA SA AKIN?!
HINDE!!
ME PROBLEMA KA BA?!
WALA!!! STRESS-FREE DAY KO NGAYON KAYA HINDI AKO DAPAT MAG-ISIP NG PROBLEMA!!!
E, BAKIT 'DI MO AKO PINAPANSIN?!
E, ISA KA SA PROBLEMA 'NO?!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


ALIS D'YAN! DI AKO CREMATORIUM!
TATUMMOL

Beyond the Arts Month festivities, the grim reality of the music scene

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

IT was a period of musicals extolling national heroes ("Ang Pagpatay Kay Luna" with music by Jesse Lucas), the return of Nena del Rosario in the Mozart Concerto No. 20, the Asian premiere of Piazzolla's Concerto para Piano cuerda y Percusion with Huberto Quagliata as soloist, the birth of the Philippine Flute Choir under Tony Maigue, the Manila debut of chamber music duo, violinist Melissa Exmundo and pianist Jonathan Arevalo Coo, and the triumphant recital of soprano Lilac Cana with superb accompaniment by Lourdes de Leon Gregorio, the last two at the Heritage House in Blue Ridge.

The period uncovered the special interpretative talent of Namcya winner Oliver Salonga who should revive excitement in piano playing among the new batch of keyboard artists. His interpretation of Bach, Mozart and Chopin has a distinct and original flavor and his love for music showed in every note.

Meanwhile, as the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) launched their opening salvos for the celebration of National Arts Month this month, it was easy to see the state of arts and culture in the country.

The NCCA parade got rained out in the morning and the skies cleared in the afternoon in time for the CCP to show off Philippine rituals from different regions with two show-biz entertainers (Jericho Rosales and Angelu de Leon) introducing the different segments.

But there is a grim reality beyond these choreographed rituals paying tribute to the arts.

In faraway Catanduanes, music lovers have not heard a live orchestra; in Isabela and Cagayan, musicians and laymen wonder why Jose Maceda is a National Artist for Music (many in fact don't know who he is); friends swear a live classical music have yet to be heard in Batanes; Palawan heard its first live cello music only two years ago (through Namcya winner Victor Michael Coo); in Ilocos, they will never know that an Ilocana named Evelyn Mandac sang with the king of opera Placido Domingo, but she has yet to be heard in her home province. Music lovers in Bukidnon, Cotabato, Camarines Norte and Romblon will never know—by actual exposure—why Cecile Licad is called the greatest pianist of her generation by no less than a piano titan from Argentina, Martha Argerich, who is a close friend of the Filipina pianist.

RAUL Sunico is the new dean of the UST Conservatory of Music, replacing Erlinda Fule.

Music lovers in Iloilo represented by Baby Jardenil of the University of San Agustin Conservatory of Music, told the INQUIRER Ilonggos get to hear a piano concerto and an orchestra only once in a decade (the last was in the mid-'80s with Corazon Pineda Kabayao as soloist in the Liszt concerto with the Manila Symphony Orchestra under Gilopez Kabayao and the latest was last month when Ingrid Sala Santamaria and Reynaldo Reyes played the Grieg and Tchaikovsky concertos).

We love to extol our young talents on Namcya winners' concert but they are promptly forgotten after the plaques and trophies have been given out, leaving them with literally no chances of playing with the national orchestra unless the family hire it (at P75,000 per rehearsal and P100,000 per performance; you can hire the San Miguel Philharmonic at P1.5 million minimum with related expenses—rental of instruments, catered food, transport, janitorial services—to the tune of another half a million).

Indeed, we love spectacle on National Arts Month, but where are the national treasures and their works and why aren't they heard or seen in the countryside?

With the millions of NCCA and the massive cultural promotions network of CCP, there is no reason this galling state of the arts should continue to exist. The sight of National Artists being herded for National Arts Month festivities and with none of their works being performed is an anomaly.

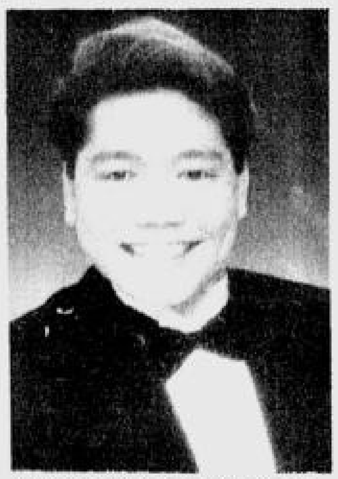
It is in this light that I appreciate the missionary spirit of pianists like Ingrid Sala Santamaria and Reynaldo Reyes who, last month, rode boats, crossed rivers, and took Asian Spirit flights to give 10 concerts in 12 days from Ormoc (Leyte) to Tagbilaran (Bohol), Iligan, Silay City, Iloilo City and Cagayan de Oro, and other places.

Catching up with their concert in San Jose de Buenavista in Antique province (hosted by Gov. Salvacion Zaldivar Perez) where they received a rousing standing ovation, I discovered that the Schumann and Tchaikovsky concertos were the province folk's first brush with a live piano concerto.

Governor Perez confided she has had enough of dirty politics in the province and now she is using the arts to unify her province.

Speaking after the concert at the Evelio Javier Gym, Governor Perez told her constituents that—as the result of the concert showed—"music is indeed food for the soul and allows us to discover our higher self and thus help banish pettiness and negative thoughts."

How I wish NCCA and CCP would mount more projects that ennoble the human soul and not just mount well-funded spectacle that would please COA auditors but alienate the artists.


JONATHAN Coo will perform Schubert, Schumann, Muyco, Kasilag and OPM with baritone Marvin Gayramon on March 22 at 6 p.m. in "Paco Park Presents."

PIANIST Reynaldo Reyes gave 10 concerts in 12 days in the South.

HONRADO Fernandez is the new director of the Philippine High School for the Arts.

Here and there

THE DEBUT of Korean pianist Hae Won Shin with the Manila Symphony Orchestra under Arturo Molina was simply gratifying. The pieces—Demersseman's Sixieme Solo de Concert Op. 82 and Chaminade's Concerto for Flute and Orchestra—had satisfactory reading and the input of Ms Shin as soloist was formidable. She rose up to the challenge with aplomb and her rapport with orchestra was commendable. Surprisingly her instrument was heard above the orchestra all throughout (I was seated in the last row) and I thought the acoustics was not so bad even without a shell.

* * *

Meanwhile, Cecile Licad had another well-received concert in Bogota as soloist in Chopin No. 2. She is headed for Taiwan this month as soloist in Brahms No. 1 and she will proceed to Nanking and Beijing for a solo recital. Next week, she performs in Paris with prize-winning German cellist Alban Gerhardt. Their recent duo concert at the Metropolitan Museum in New York was the rave of New York-based musicians.

Tenor Gary del Rosario is the lead tenor in the revival of "Mikado" by the Cleveland Opera and he is due to sing Borsa in "Rigoletto" in May.

* * *

The new director of the Philippine High School for the Arts is Honrado Fernandez, former dean of the UP College of Architecture. He replaced Nanding Josef, now CCP vice president and artistic director. Meanwhile, pianist Raul Sunico was named the new dean of the UST Conservatory of Music. He replaced Erlinda Fule.

* * *

Our condolences to the family of former Madrigal Singer member Chipay Elegado whose grandfather, Ildefonso Elegado Sr., passed away recently. Chipay, who is now with the Ateneo Glee Club, is the daughter of Mr. and Ms Sonny Elegado, who don't miss classical concert presentations in Bacolod.

Ballet Manila holds summer workshop

LEARN ballet from the masters such as Lisa Macuja and Osias Barroso as Ballet Manila conducts its summer workshop starting April 8. Auditions will be held on March 16 for scholars as well as potential company members and apprentices. Venue is the BM Studio at 1865 Donada St., Pasay City.

Registration starts at 10 a.m. with the audition proper at 2 p.m. A P100 fee will be charged.

Applicants must be between 6-15 years old for girls and 6-18 years old for boys. Those accepted into the program will be trained in Ballet Manila's signature Vaganova technique.

Those not taken in as scholars can enrol as regular students in the summer workshop.

There are classes in five levels of ballet, from beginner ballet to advanced ballet, pointe work, partnering and boys' class.

The summer classes will be held Mondays to Saturdays. Aside from Macuja and Barroso, the faculty includes BM junior principal Jeffrey Espejo, senior soloists Pamela Asprer and Elline Damian, soloist Sandra Lynn Huang and BM company member Eileen Lopez. Some classes will be handled by Russian ballet master Victor Saveliev.

The workshop will culminate in a grand production on May 24 and 25 at the Star Theater inside Star City at the CCP Complex in Roxas Boulevard, with graduates performing alongside BM's roster of talents.

Call Ballet Manila at 525-5967/1584, 512-5031/5032, or visit the BM website at www.balletmanila.net.

LISA Macuja with ballet students of Ballet Manila

'Sampung Mga Daliri, Atbp.' at CCP

THE UST Conservatory of Music and its Alumni Association will present the annual gala concert "Sampung mga Daliri, Atbp." on March 10, 6 p.m., at the Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo, Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Now on its 18th year, this unique presentation was originally conceived by the late National Artist, composer and faculty member Ernani Cuenco. It showcases the different talents of the school's faculty, alumni and students highlighted by a number of pieces performed on 10 grand pianos by different sets of keyboard players.

The repertoire includes Rossini's "Overture to the Barber of Seville," Buencamino's "Inday" and "Larawan," De Falla's "Ritual Fire Dance" from "Amor Brujo," excerpts from Stravinsky's "Firebird" arranged by A. Feliciano, and Orff's "Carmina Burana."

Also featured are the various instrumental and vocal ensembles of the Conservatory: the UST Symphony Orchestra, UST Symphonic Band, UST Brass Band, UST Jazz Band, UST Percussion Ensemble, UST Guitar Ensemble, Conservatory of Music Rondalla, Coro Tomasino, Liturgikon Vocal Ensemble and multilevel chorus classes.

Tickets are available at the UST Conservatory of Music at 731-4022/3010 local 8246, and at the CCP box office.

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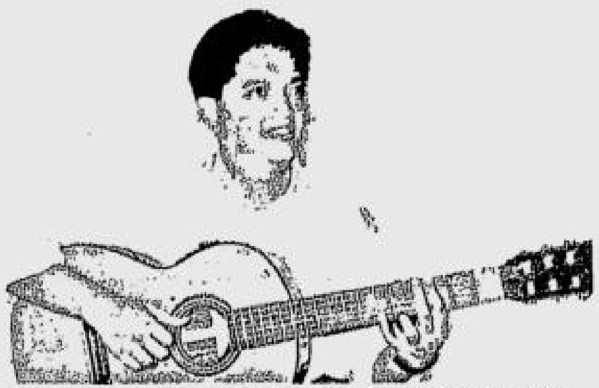
ASSOCIATE Justice Artemio Panganiban, Australian Ambassador John Buckley, Marixi Prieto and French Ambassador Gilles Chouraqui



JCO Razon accompanied the Camacho-Macapagal duet, "O Sole Mio"

Doro's twin book launch draws A-1 crowd

DIPLOMATIC SWIRL

By Amiga

PDI president Alexandra Prieto Romualdez, Amando Doronila and President Macapagal-Arroyo

JAIME Zobel de Ayala and Raul Concepcion

FORMER President Fidel Ramos and Gwen Gonzales

EUGENIA Apostol

SPANISH journalist Jose Rodriguez (right) with wife and Celia Diaz Laurel

WOW! That was some book launch Sir Doro (**Amando Doronila**) had for his two *oeuvres*, "The Fall of Joseph Estrada: The Inside Story" and "Between Fires: Fifteen Perspectives on the Estrada Crisis." In attendance were **President Macapagal-Arroyo** and former President **Fidel Ramos.** Not to mention the Secretary of Finance, **Lito Camacho** (singing away as always—his mom says he even takes lessons).

My goodness, what with the INQUIRER chair **Marixi Prieto**, president **Sandy Prieto-Romualdez**, founder **Eggie Apostol** and editor in chief **Letty Magsanoc** (elegant in black)present, Doro had a power cast going.

The two books, published by INQUIRER Books and Anvil Publishing, are set to become the final word on the downfall of **Joseph Estrada**. Edited by Doronila, "Between Files" consists of essays providing a many-sided postmortem on the Estrada presidency. The essays are written by **Ma. Cynthia Rose Banzon Bautista**, **Emmanuel de Dios**, **Carolina Hernandez**, **Jose Abueva**, **Arsenio Balicasan**, **Joseph Lim**, **Randolf David**, **Cayetano Paderanga**, **Cristine Atienza**, **Ferdinand Co**, **Flora Belle Villarante**, **Fermin Adriano**, **Karina Constantino David**, **Raul Palabrica**, **John Carroll**, S.J., **Teodoro Casiño**, **Guillermo Luz** and **Michael Vatikiotis**.

During the launch at the Manila Polo Club, groomed in classic fashion for the night by **Teyet Pascual**, there were several ambassadors, including Belgian Ambassador **Roland Van Remoortele**, Danish Ambassador **Peter Rosting**, Swedish Ambassador **Ulf Hakansson**, French Ambassador **Gilles Chouraqui**, Australian Ambassador **John Buckley**, Singapore Ambassador **Jacky Foo**. There were also the Romulo brothers as well as the Concepcion brothers. They stood in line to get their copies autographed by the inimitable author.

There were also several politicians, such as Environment Secretary **Sonny Alvarez**, Senate President **Franklin Drilon**, Senators **Nene Pimentel** and **Kiko Pangilinan** (only one in five senators who didn't vote to let Estrada leave the country on his knees, oops, I meant for). By the way, it was pointed out to me that as elected officials, Sen. **Loi Estrada** and San Juan Mayor **Jinggoy** cannot resign from their positions unless they want to be jailed for dereliction of duty in the event their man doesn't return. Tsk, tsk, is somebody trying to put one over us again?

There were a few (mind you, few) women like **Beth Day Romulo**, **Joanie Orendain** and **Bonjin Bolinao**, who pointed out that the super red wine was a Merlot Chateau Rothchild. The wine went well with the fresh oysters. Leave it to Doro! Now who else could assemble a cast like that—and classic wine to boot—to launch a book?

DR. Eleuterio "Teyet" Pascual, Leica Carpo and Finance Secretary Isidro Camacho

SEN. Franklin Drilon

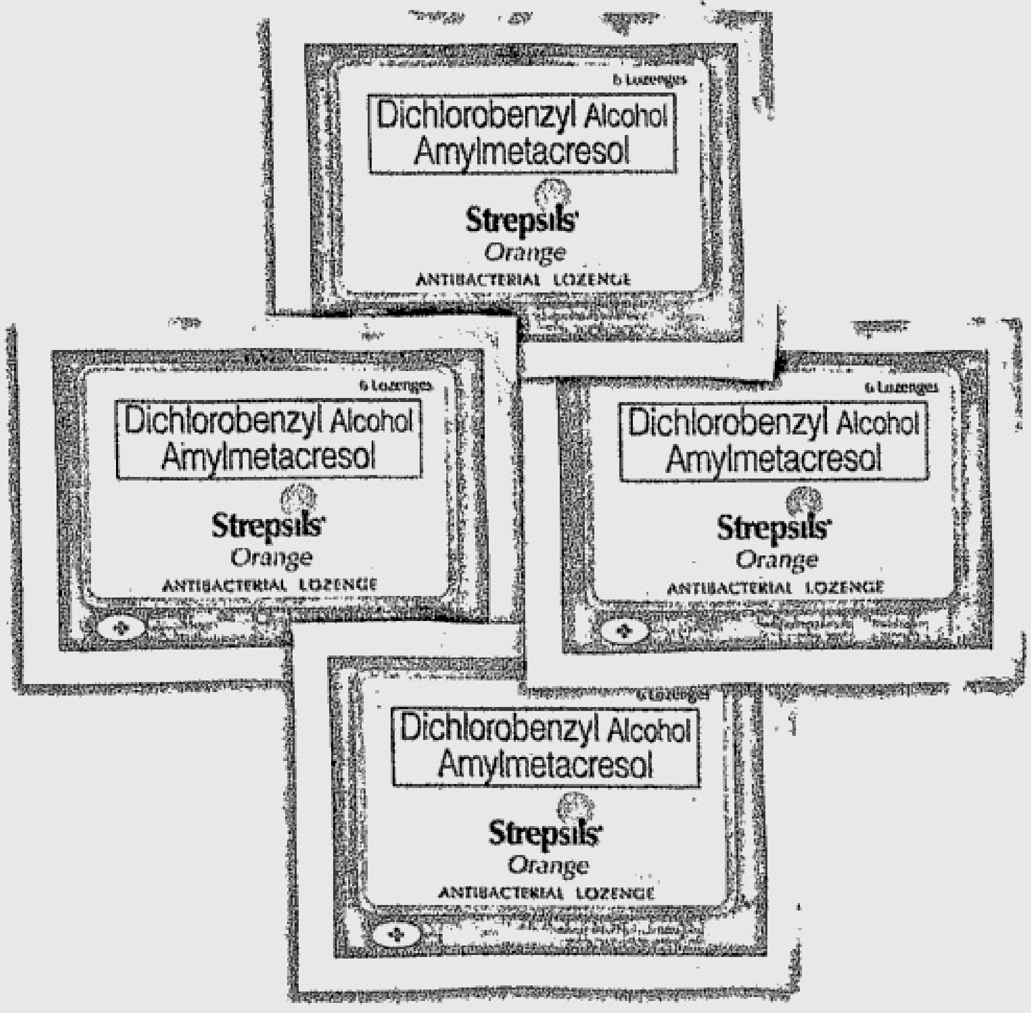
FRANKIE Sionil Jose and Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr.

PHOTOS BY BETOY JOHNSON

GLORIA Angara

RICARDO Romulo and Beth Day Romulo

VICTOR Corpuz



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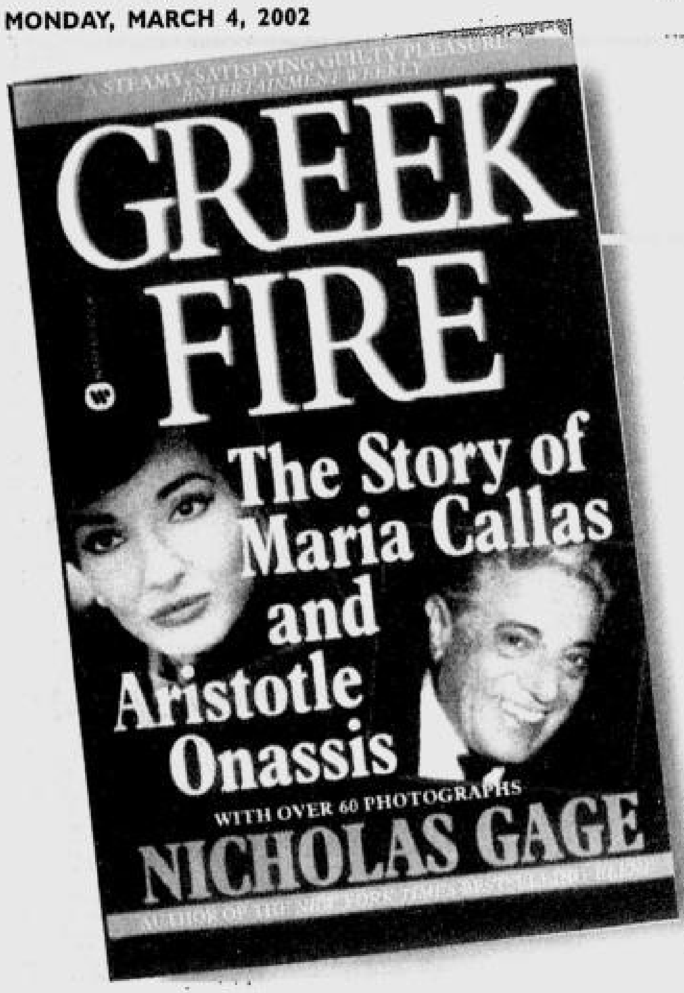
LIFESTYLE

Books

A Greek tragedy all their own

He was Agamemnon returning with a trophy wife, Jackie Onassis. She was Clytemnestra in her fiery rage, minus the murderous thoughts


A STEAMY, SATISFYING GUILTY PLEASURE
ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY
GREEK FIRE
The Story of Maria Callas and Aristotle Onassis
WITH OVER 60 PHOTOGRAPHS
NICHOLAS GAGE
AUTHOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

Greek Fire
By Nicholas Gage
Warner Books, 2001
565 pages

By Amadis Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

REVIEW

THEY were the two most famous Greeks of their time.

She was known as La Divina, an opera singer acclaimed for the remarkable range of her voice, and for the dramatic intensity with which she imbued her roles: Maria Callas.

He was a shipping magnate who rose from adversity to become one of the world's richest men: Aristotle Onassis.

The two, both married, met at a ball tendered for Callas by society hostess Elsa Maxwell, a lesbian in love with the soprano.

Two years later, in 1959, Onassis invited Callas and other prominent personalities, like statesman Winston Churchill, to a cruise onboard his luxurious yacht, Christina.

During that fateful cruise along the Mediterranean, the two fell madly in love with each other. Their love affair and its aftermath created headlines around the world and reached "operatic proportions," declares author Gage.

Onassis' glamorous wife, Tina Livanos (who had also been playing around in reaction to Onassis' previous infidelities), obtained a divorce in the United States. Callas' husband, Batista Meneghini, "dumpy, awkward, much older," sued for a legal separation in Italy.

Correction

Biographer Gage, a former investigative reporter for the New York Times, wrote this book to correct the many inaccuracies and outright inventions which he said he found in previous biographies of Callas and Onassis.

With a zeal matching if not exceeding that of a PCIJ (Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism) writer, Gage checks and rechecks the information from previous books and other sources, separating the myths from the facts.

For example, it is not true that Onassis forced Callas to undergo an abortion. The singer spread this story to spite Onassis when he married Jacqueline Kennedy.

What Gage documented is that Callas, who dearly wanted to have a child, gave birth to the tycoon's love child, a boy named Omero. But the baby had difficulty breathing, and he lived only for two hours.

While the focus of the book is on the celebrated and controversial love affair, the author does not limit himself to this. There are insights into the characters of the two protagonists and those close to them, along with the highlights of their life.

Triumphs and disasters

Callas' career, for one, had as many triumphs as disasters. The 1950s saw her voice at its peak, critics agree; but by the early 1960s, she could no longer control it. Her voice would wobble during the high notes, triggering hisses from the audience and attacks from the critics.

Her performance in Bellini's "Norma" was a riot—literally. Her voice faltered during a high note. Amid the uproar, Callas signaled the conductor to repeat the passage, and this time she made it.

Her loyal fans and her detractors then turned against each other. Brawls erupted, and the Paris police had to be called in.

With Onassis, "for the first time in her life, Maria felt loved for herself and not for her ability to sing for her supper," as the author puts it. But Onassis never married her, because his children despised their father's mistress.

It was Jackie Kennedy, the former US first lady, whom Onassis married in 1968. Jackie was a trophy for Onassis, while she needed financial security. The relationship with Callas continued, but apparently had become platonic. The diva refused to sleep again with the tycoon while he was married to Jackie.

The last years were not happy for both, especially for Onassis. He died in 1975 at the age of 71, following a gall bladder operation. Callas, who became a recluse after Onassis' death, followed him in 1977. She was 53, dead of heart failure due to diet medication and dependence on Mandrax sleeping pills.

Not all the wealth, fame and talent in the world made Maria Callas and Aristotle Onassis happy. Perhaps there's a lesson here for us lesser mortals.

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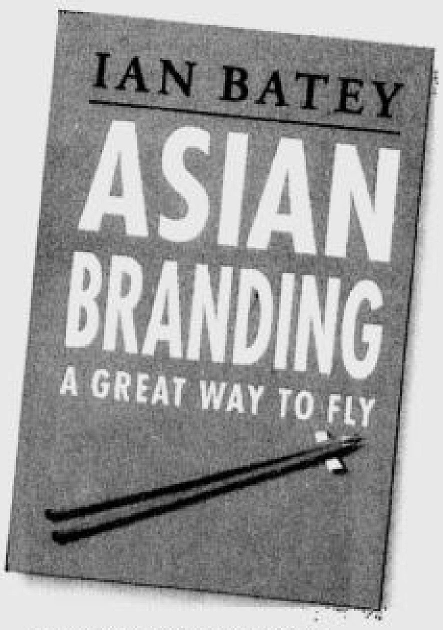
What's your brand?



Asian Branding: A Great Way to Fly
By Ian Batey
Prentice Hall, 2002

By James Perez Ong
Contributor

REVIEW

YOU have a product or a service and you want to market it not just in Asia but all over the globe. How do you do it? Hire an advertising or marketing agency and put out print and television ads. It's that easy, right? Wrong. In fact, nothing could be more wrong, says Ian Batey, author of "Asian Branding: A Great Way to Fly." That's because the key to having a successful product lies first and foremost in building the brand. And that entails an honest, serious look at your company and a dedication to the future. Before you decide to get in the game, ask yourself, do you really want to stay in the game?

Batey is the founder of Batey Ads, whose first major account was Singapore Airlines (SIA) in 1972. He has several successes under his belt, and one of them is the airline's "Singapore Girl" campaign, which helped SIA achieve its vision of becoming "the best airline brand in the aviation industry."

Batey believes this is Asia's century, but that it needs to change its parochial ways and become more global if it wants to reap international successes.

To do this, Asian brands need to be developed and used as Western brand names are and have been used. He cites, as an example, the success of Marlboro cigarettes, which has "triumphantly crossed all kinds of cultural and social barriers... the Marlboro cowboy has become an international icon in countries where cowboys never existed!"

Trick

The trick, he says, lies in consistently promoting one's core branding properties. Whenever legally possible, for instance, Marlboro's "brand advertising is universally the same, all over the world, pitched to every socio-economic level."

When you talk of a brand, you just don't talk about a product. You talk about a soul

The difference between brands and products is that brands usually last longer than the products. That is why, for example, a detergent brand can continually repackage or reformulate without losing any market appeal. If consumers believe in a particular brand, they would unhesitatingly embrace its many variations.

WHAT'S/ p.E4

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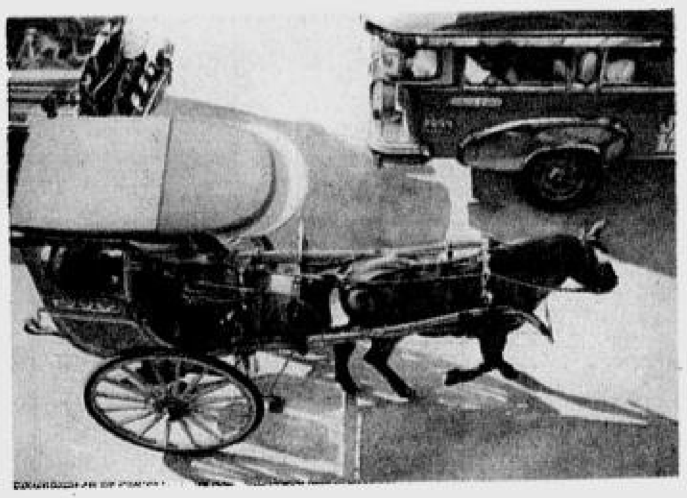
TALK'N TEXT

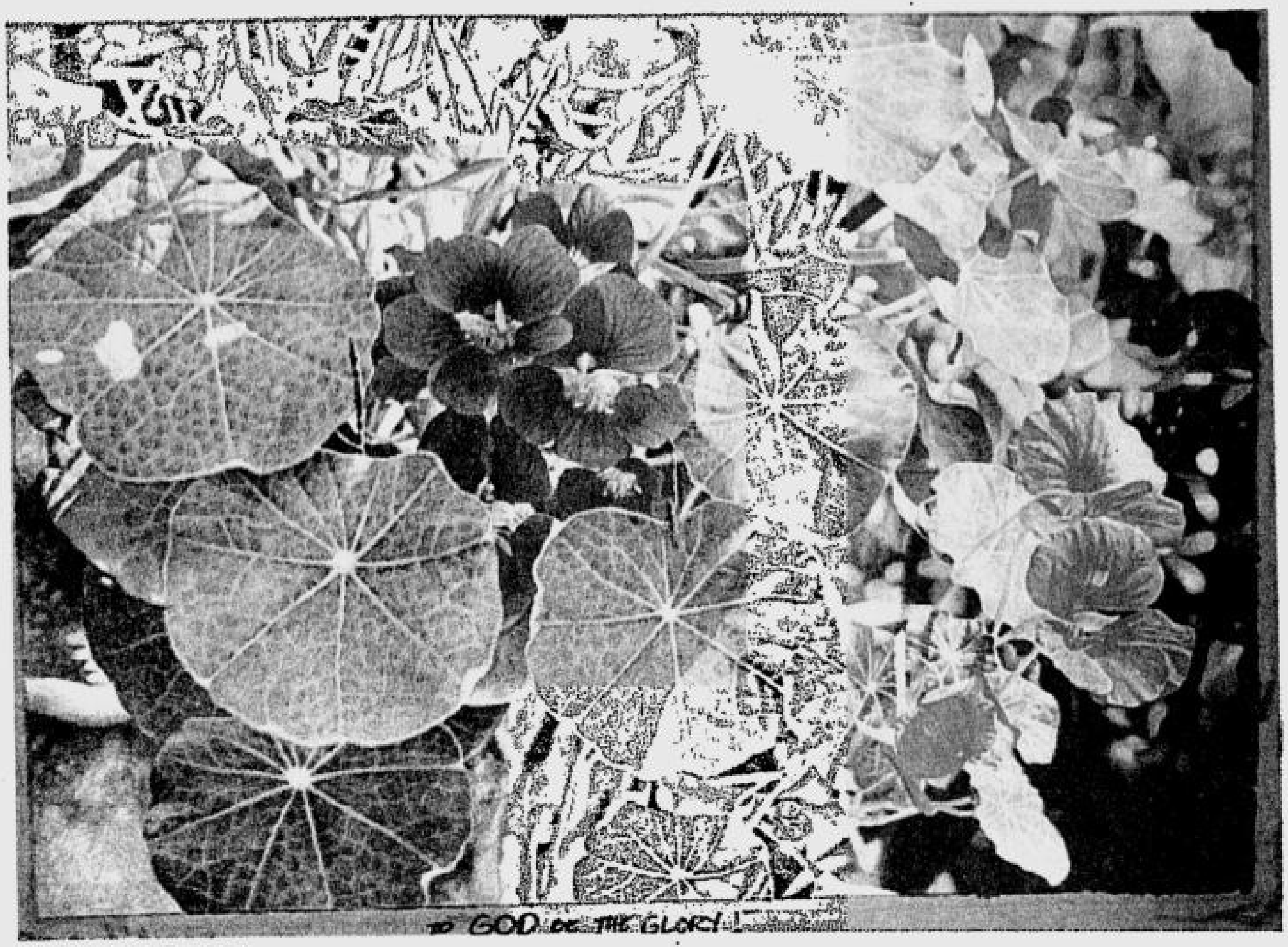


"KALESA"

Art in bloom

Realist Chris Mirang proves aquarelle is the best medium to depict flowers, magnify the sensuous qualities of the subject

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor


TO GOD be THE GLORY!

"AFTERNOON Delight"

THE TEMPTATION to depict flowers seizes every artist who, at some point or another, succumbs to this undying symbol of rebirth, of the incomparable beauty of nature—and the transience of life.

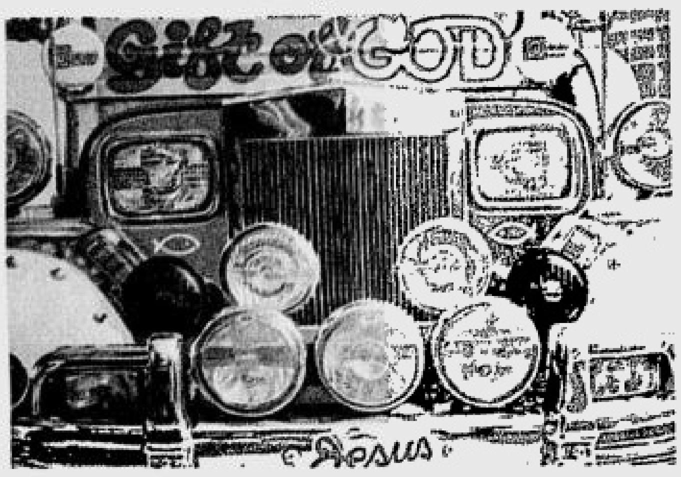
And nowhere have flowers become more seductive than here and now, a time when the pall of our economic woes can just as easily be obliterated by the mere sight of blossoms cheering us up as we go about the chores of day-to-day living.

One artist who decided to transform the month of February into a strictly floral affair is Chris Mirang, a magic realist painter who emerged as one of the Top 5 watercolorists in the Kulay sa Tubig Annual competition for two consecutive years.

In his solo show, "February Affair," at Gallery Genesis, Mirang proved that aquarelle is, indeed, the best medium for depicting flowers, given its innate ability to magnify the sensuous qualities of the subject. His concerns, however, evoked more than the usual built-in romantic overtones, as he set about the task with his long kinship to still-life tradition, and his foray into magic realism.

Uncanny

Mirang first caught critical attention with his uncanny renderings of the Filipino jeepney and *kalesa*, both prize-winning watercolors, which he opted to represent as ubiquitous symbols of Pinoy folk culture. In "Kalesa," he preferred to show the horse-drawn rig from the vantage point of a top shot, combining it with the image of speeding jeepneys at the *kalesa*'s side.



"BIYAHENG Langit"

In "Biyaheng Langit," Mirang showed a jeepney's façade, its array of headlights and religious messages clearly emblematic of our folk religion and baroque sensibility.

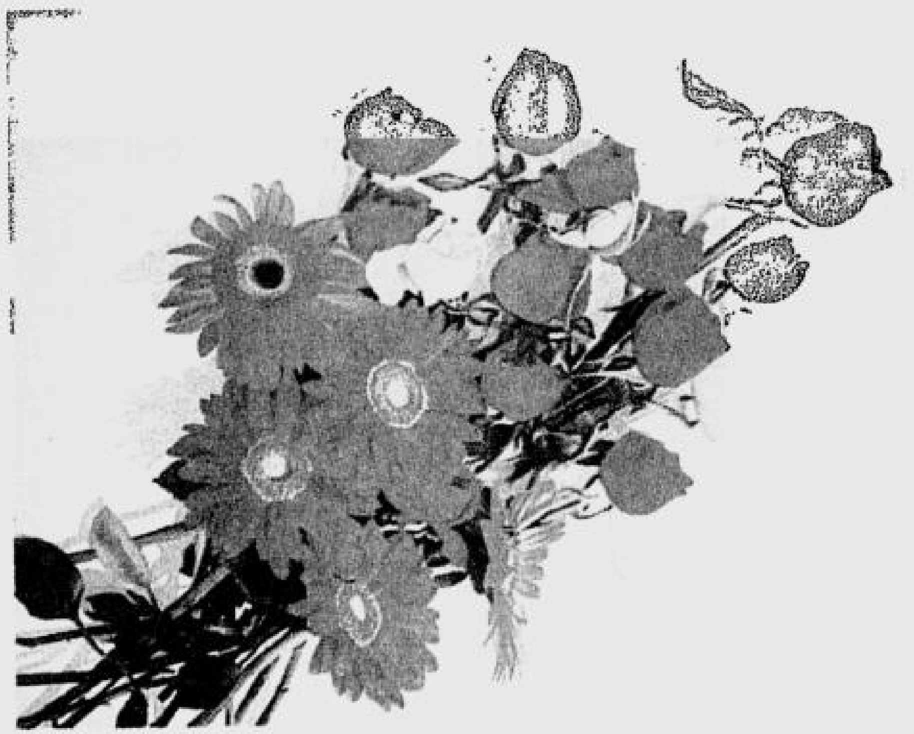
In the February show, Mirang pursued his interest in flowers by capturing his subjects in various modes and moods, as well as the diversity of flowers, ranging from roses to lilies and the perennial favorite of many a gardener—the regal bird-of-paradise.

Novel approach

Mirang used a fresh and novel approach to his subject: His flowers were strewn on the surface, totally detached from their sources, but sustained mainly by the splendid color of their petals and set against a moody backdrop of shadows.

In "Pure Intentions," a dozen of pink roses lent itself to a commemoration of life's pleasures. The dominant message of the month being that of love, Mirang literally threw in those ubiquitous red roses, finding jovial company with lilies and other blooms, the artist turning wildly unconventional by painting a bunch of blue roses, aptly titled "Bluer than Blue." It was closer, of course, to fantasy than reality.

The titles of the paintings, in fact, alluded to romantic pursuits: "Summer Love," "Warm Heart," "Love on Fire," "Burning Desire." Like the paintings, the titles teased and seduced viewers with their double-entendre.



"LOTTA Love"

But not everything was a rose for Mirang's oeuvre. Sensing perhaps that he had exhausted every facet of his subject, he turned to a vegetable-plant variety in "Afternoon Delight," with his depiction of a squash plant, complete with its sun-dappled leaves and exquisite orange-hued flowers. In another work, "The Queen of Hearts," Mirang preferred the sight of a solitary *bandera española*, with its long willowy stem and a crown of multicolored bulb.

More than just romance, he had instilled the enduring spirit of kinship between the artist and the viewer, that what we see in art is ours as much as it belongs to the artist. As Georgia O'Keeffe, the quintessential flower artist of our generation, once said: "You write about my flower as if I think and see what you think and see of the flower and I don't."

VISUAL ARTS

Cid Reyes at West, Maganda at Nine

CRITIC-PAINTER Cid Reyes will hold a solo exhibit on March 7-21 at the West Gallery, 4/L SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong City. "Homage to Malang" is Reyes' tribute to the celebrated artist. It was Malang who encouraged Reyes, better known as an art critic, to return to his first vocation, painting. The show launches Reyes' "Negros" series. The concept refers to the dominant use of black and an allusion to the landscapes of Negros, the artist's adopted province. Reyes is the author of several art books, such as "Conversations on Philippine Art," "Thirty Years of Malang's Women," "National Artist: Arturo Luz," "Lim: His Life in Art" and "Valerie." His books on Bencab and National Artist J. Elizalde Navarro will be launched soon. He writes a weekly art column, Galleryhopping, for Today. An adman by profession, Reyes is VP executive creative director and chief creative officer of leading advertising multinational Ace Saatchi & Saatchi.

MAGANDA AT GALLERY NINE. "Lucid Dreams" is the second one-man show of surrealist Charles "Agang" Maganda. It opens on March 9 at Gallery Nine (4/L SM Megamall) and features his recent oil paintings depicting dreamlike scenarios of towers and church-life edifices atop gaping canyons and floating stairways. Call 687-7302.

AJERO AT PINTO. Wrought-iron artist Joel Ajero holds his first solo exhibit of functional art pieces at Gallery 1 of Pinto Art Gallery in Antipolo until March 24. The exhibit features recent furniture pieces in wrought iron, wood, stained glass and steel, such as king-sized bed, home furnishings, accents and tables. Call 697-1015.

REYES AT THE GALLERY. Leonardo Reyes holds "Ryukins and Good Fortune" at The Gallery (G/F PJL Corporate Center, 1782 Nicanor Garcia St., Makati City). The show opens on March 8, 5 p.m., and features 38 paintings of the ryukin species of goldfish. Call 892-8456 or 724-1800.

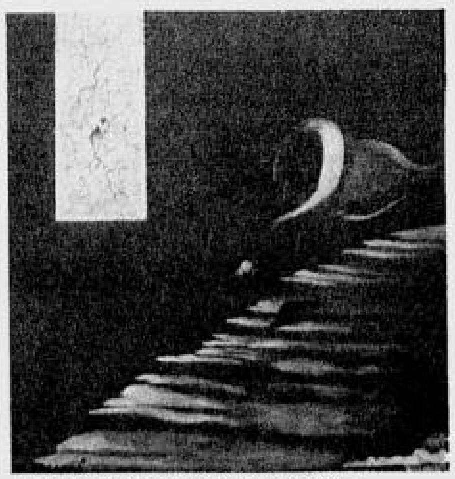
ABSTRACT EXHIBIT. "Silent Talking," an abstract exhibit of Australian artist Tony Twigg and Filipino artists Gus Albor and Roberto Robles, will open on March 15 at the Australia Centre. The exhibit goes to Sydney, Australia in October. "Silent Talking" is a demonstration of the depth and wealth of cultural exchanges among the three artists.

FLEET AT THE AUSTRALIAN CENTER. Australian artist Jacki Fleet presents "Pulse 2," March 19 to April 19, at the Australia Centre. The show features six paintings, five of them recent works in mix-media, 13 prints done with photopolymer process and a small maquette of the "1,000 Souls" installation from a previous exhibit.

The artworks were recently exhibited in Luna ArtSpace in Cebu City.

LARKIN AT THE DRAWING ROOM. Don Larkin, an American printmaker and accomplished ceramic artist, holds a one-man exhibit of monoprints until March 20 at The Drawing Room, G/F Metrostar Building, 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City. Call 897-6990/7877.

GROUP EXHIBIT. The Ayala Museum Art Galleries at the old Makati Stock Exchange Building on Ayala Avenue will open tomorrow the "homecoming" exhibit by the International Federation of Asian Artists. The exhibit features works by 20 Filipino artists featured in the recent 16th Asian International Art Exhibition at the Guangdong Museum of Art, People's Republic of China. The exhibit will run until March 31. Call 812-1191 to 95 local 103.



"DREAMING of Eden" by Charles "Agang" Maganda at Gallery Nine

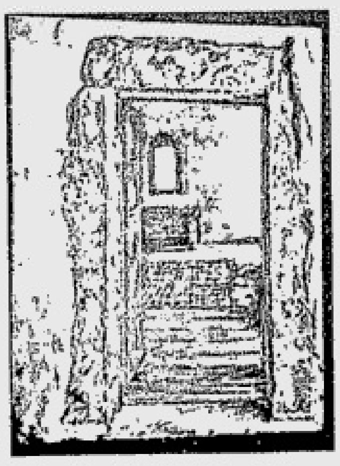
GROUP EXHIBIT AT THE ATRIUM. The Art Discovery and Learning Foundation Inc. is holding its first group painting exhibit until March 10 at the Atrium Gallery, National Kidney and Transplant Institute, East Avenue, QC.

PHOTO WORKSHOP. The Alcove Photo Gallery and EyeAsia Phils. will hold this month its annual Manila Photo Workshop at the reading room of the Filipinas Heritage Library. "Photo 101: Basic 35mm Photography" will be facilitated by Kat C. Palasi. Call 892-1801.

DIGITAL CLASS. The Ayala Museum is adding Digital Art for Kids in its Escuela sa Museo Program with the donation of Young Explorer computers by IBM and color printers by Epson Phils. The first digital art class was conducted Feb. 23 at the Ayala Museum (3/F Glorietta 2, Ayala Center). Call Christy Monastrial at 810-8407.

ART WORKSHOP. Organizers of "Color the Wind Art Workshop for Youngsters" is now accepting participants to an eight-session workshop to begin March 31. Eli Africa, visual arts professor of the University of the Philippines and St. Benilde, will conduct the workshop at Miriam College. Call 633-7198.

CID Reyes at West Gallery



FIGARO Coffee Co. is holding an exhibit by Pardo de Leon at its new function rooms on Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center. The show, "Steps, Doors & Windows of the Old World," will run until March 30. The limited series will feature doors, windows and stairways that evoke the unique character of Europe. Call 631-3061.

GROUP EXHIBIT AT ALLIANÇE FRANÇAISE. "Titled Untitled" is a visual essay featuring the diverse works of the painting majors of St. Scholastica's College, Manila. Artists include Noel Bais, Ramona de la Cruz, Shaun Michael Marasigan, Marianne Orellana and Janice Anne Troesch, students of Don Amorsolo. The works are in mixed media and oil on canvas. The exhibit opens at 6:30 p.m. tonight at the Alliançe Française de Manille, Totalfinaelf Gallery (209 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati City). The exhibit runs until March 15. Call 895-7585/7441.

GROUP EXHIBIT AT SAN AGUSTIN MUSEUM. Artworks that use various techniques, materials and processes to create dimension, texture, color, style and meaning are showcased in a group exhibit, "Fusion & Contrast," until March 14 at the San Agustin Museum. The exhibit features the works of Ann Galeon-Anolin, lecturer at the FEU College of Fine Arts; Fr. Dominador Besares, O.S.A., prior of the San Agustin Seminary; and Jesus Genotiva and Raymon Maliwat, alumnus and senior instructor of the PWU Institute of Fine Arts and Design, respectively.

A few films that flabbergast filmgoers

By Constantino C. Tejero

AS if the movies running for the Oscars were not enough, outstanding alternative films are being screened left and right in Metro Manila. That rather rubs off the excitement surrounding this year's Oscar nominees shown in commercial theaters.

After Cine Europa came Cinemanila, followed by the Metro Manila Film Festival, then Pelikula at Lipunan, the Oscar nominees, the ongoing Spanish filmfest at the Instituto Cervantes, the Chinese and French films at Greenbelt, and soon the Japanese films at Shangri-La Plaza. Organizers of these events seem determined not to make filmgoers rest.

The 9th Pelikula at Lipunan, presented by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Mowelfund Film Institute, should be considered a relative success for both organizers and moviegoers. After screening at the SM Megamall on Feb. 13-19, it moved to Iloilo, then Pampanga and Baguio.

The festival is not only extending to the urban centers of the regions but this year it has also started expanding its program. Whereas before it concentrated on showcasing old Filipino classics and holding premieres of outstanding foreign films, local independent features and experimental shorts, now it has added digital films, a children's program, even music videos.

FILMMAKER Julian Schnabel: Painterly and magisterial

PHOTO FROM PREMIERE MAGAZINE

Celebration and tribute

In celebration of Amnesty International's 40th anniversary in the Philippines, the festival held a Human Rights Program as well.

Screened were representative films on American imperialism (Lupita Concio's "Minsa'y Isang Gamugamo" and Sari Dalena's "Memories of a Forgotten War"); labor unrest (Mike de Leon's "Sister Stella L."); dictatorship and militarization (Chito Roño's "Eskapo" and Kiri Dalena's "Alingawngaw ng Mga Punglo"); displacement of cultural minorities (Joey Lozano's "Nakamata"); street children (Mes de Guzman's "Batang Trapo" and Ditsi Carolino's "Masakit sa Mata"); women's oppression and mystique (Marilou Diaz-Abaya's "Brutal" and Nick Deocampo's "Ynang Bayan: To Be a Woman Is to Live at a Time of War").

There was also a tribute to murdered actress Nida Blanca, in which three of her acting vehicles were screened: Eddie Garcia's "Magdusa Ka," Ading Fernando's "John and Marsha" and F.H. Constantino's "Waray-Waray."

We're just a bit perplexed that festival organizers should "premiere" films that had been shown recently in commercial theaters, such as Giuseppe Tornatore's "Malena," Richard Lester's "A Hard Day's Night," Zhang Yimou's "The Road Home." The slots could have been given over to really new, hard-to-come-by entries.

Explosive material

What were stormed by moviegoers were the screenings of the opening and closing films. We were flabbergasted by the sheer number of cineastes in Metro Manila (or was that really the case?).

"Amores Perros," by Alejando González Iñárritu, is a lethal film with a flamboyant technique, underscored by dazzling camerawork and frenetic editing. It is a triptych about the void in people's lives, metaphorized by the void in spaces and secret recesses.

The cyclical pattern of the disjointed narrative we've seen before (notably in the Macedonian film "Before the Rain" and Tarantino's "Pulp Fiction"), but it is the filmmaker's acute sense of class and milieu that most fascinates us. And the performances are explosive.

Equally explosive but more poignant is Julian Schnabel's "Before Night Falls," with its painterly images and often magisterial camera movement.

Javier Bardem's portrayal of the homosexual Cuban writer Reinaldo Arenas is a huge leap from his rôles as the seducer in Bigas Luna's "Jamón, Jamón" and an invalid ex-cop in Almodóvar's "Carne Trémula." Here tackling riskier material, he invests his character with just enough swishiness as to be natural, just enough nonchalance and defiance as to be empathetic.

"AMORES Perros": Lethal

Worth citing also is the brief cameo of Johnny Depp (certainly the most talented American actor of his batch) in dual rôles of the transvestite prisoner Bon Bon and a fascist prison lieutenant. He underacts in one and overacts in the other—and how funny!

Satisfying experience

Over at the Alliance Française de Manille, they're screening films that should warm the cockles of cineastes. Last month, we missed Leos Carax's "Pola X" (filmization of Melville's "Pierre, or, The Ambiguities") and Jean-Pierre Jeunet's "Le Fabuleux Destin d' Amélie Poulain" (nominee for this year's Best Foreign-Language Film Oscar).

But we caught Roland Joffe's "Vatel," a breathtaking cinematic portrayal of the splendor of the court of the Sun King. The vivid colors, the surreal goings-on, the human capacity for love, cruelty and delusion are almost unbelievable.

A most satisfying experience was the screening of Luis Buñuel's "El Ángel Exterminador," the opening film of the festival going on at the Instituto Cervantes until March 23. It is a cruel yet compassionate satire on high society, the elite and the culturati, with a side thrust at the Church.

This one is the reverse of the filmmaker's later "The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie." While in the latter film a group of people is perpetually thwarted from holding a dinner party, here a group of partygoers cannot seem to come out of the party.

Controlled by a Kafkaesque fate, they are held up in their host's mansion for days, weeks, months—who knows?—until all pretensions to civility and civilization have been punctured, and everyone has been reduced to animal state or suicide. When they finally come out to the world, they find themselves in a bigger prison, where everyone is a prisoner—the clergy, the mob, the police...

The effect on the viewers was such that we came out of the Salón de Actos with a silly grin and an incoherent blabber.

Japanese comedies, ikebana and posters at Shangri-La Plaza

DISCOVER and experience the lighter side of Japan as Shangri-La Plaza, in cooperation with the Japan Foundation Manila Office, Ikebana International Manila Chapter 108, Ikenobo-Ikebana Society and the Philippine Bonsai Society, celebrates Phil-Japan Friendship Month March 1-April 9.

Billed "Celebrate Nihon!," the event is a celebration of friendship, fun and discoveries in a series of showcases featuring ikebana and bonsai arrangements and demonstration at the Grand Atrium (March 1-10); contemporary Japanese comedy films in "Eiga Sai 2002: The Lighter Side of Japan" at the Cinema 2 (March 6-12); and Japan's unique graphic design through a poster exhibition at the Grand Atrium (March 20-April 9).

Celebrate friendship through flowers at the ikebana and bonsai exhibition, a veritable treat for garden and art lovers. Aside from flower and bonsai exhibits, the organizers have scheduled daily lectures and demos from the country's respected instructors of Ikenobo, Ohara and Sogetsu as well as from the Philippine Bonsai Society.

Members of the Ikebana Society Nagoya Chapter shared their expertise and art on the subject. Coming all the way from Japan to show their respective styles on March 3 at the Grand Atrium were Sankaku Ogawa (Heisei Geigitsu), Kayoko Nakashima (Kado Mishoryu School), Sachiko Mizutami (Saga Goryu School), Asuka Noro (Ikenobo School) and Katsue Nakagawa (Sogetsu School).

"Eiga Sai 2002" promises fun and relaxing time at the movies. Eight contemporary comedy films from Japan will be shown to the public for free with daily screenings at 3, 5:30 and 8 p.m. To be screened are Toshihiro Tenma's "Many Returns" (based on the successful novel "Many Happy Returns" by Beat Takeshi, one of Japan's most popular comedians and talented film directors); Takayoshi Watanabe's "Ghost Pub" (hailed as one of the best comedies of 1994 and features veteran actor Hagiwara Ken'ichi, TV actress Yamaguchi Tomoko in her first film role, and the multitalented queen of indie films Muroi Shigeru); Wada Makoto's "Uneasy Encounters" (a witty rendition of "scared people" using Japan's best character actors); Takita Yojiro's "We Are Not Alone" (based on a comic strip serialized in a weekly magazine concurrent with the films release, and directed by Takita Yojiro, known abroad for his comic magazine Komikku Zasshi Nanka Tranail in 1986); Mizutani Toshiyuki's "The Family Secret" (uses black humor to cast a sharp, satirical eye at the modern Japanese family); and Okamoto Kinachi's "Rainbow Kids" (adapted from Tendo Shin's 1979 novel, "The Big Kidnapping," which won the Japan Detective Writers Association Award).

The film festival will also bring in two films of Tomio Kuriyama, who worked under Yamada Yoji, the famous director of the movie series "Tora-san." His films to be featured are "I Go to Tokyo" (taken from a comical song sung by Yoshi Ikuzo, who portrayed the taxi driver in this film) and "Congratulatory Speech" (Kuriyama's third feature film after "I Go to Tokyo." This one is a humorous film about human relations in work and family).

Capping "Celebrate Nihon!" is a three-week touring exhibition, "Discover Japan through Contemporary Posters," a glimpse of Japan's unique graphic designs at the Grand Atrium.

"Celebrate Nihon!" at the Shangri-La Plaza is free to the public. Call 633-7851.

"RAINBOW Kids," by Kihachi Okamoto

"MANY Happy Returns," by Toshihiro Tenma

'Godspell' at St. Cecilia's Hall

"GODSPELL," the off-Broadway musical hit by Stephen Schwartz revolving around parables and stories of Matthew's Gospel, will be staged by the Harlequin Theater Guild, De La Salle University's official drama club, at the St. Cecilia's Hall, St. Scholastica's College, Manila, on March 8-10. Call Jam at (0917) 514-1911 or Kina at (0917) 830-4109.

Auditions for Trumpets play

TRUMPETS is holding auditions for a restaging of its hit musical, "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe," based on the famous C.S. Lewis story. The auditions will be held on March 9 and 16 at Stageworx, 5/L Shangri-La Plaza, Mandaluyong. Call 633-5010.

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Air Carrier: Air Canada Port Charges & Taxes: $221.55 per Person

7-Night Mediterranean Impact Cruise
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FlyCruise Package as low as $2,044 1st / 2nd person on best available outside staterooms
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Laya's fusion and fruition of arts and management

Letras Y Figuras
By Jaime C. Laya
Anvil, Manila, 2002
255 pages

By Ophelia A. Dimalanta
Contributor

REVIEW

LETTERS and numbers, the qualitative and the quantitative, artists and managers, culture and business, binaries which at a glance are antipodal come into fusion in Dr. Jaime Laya's "Letras Y Figuras." The title really refers to 19th-century paintings and watercolors based on scenes of everyday life. For instance in one, the letter "S" is formed by an ingeniously painted form of a man bearing a load of sugar cane stalks at the upper curve, and in another, a man on his haunches with a rooster on the lower curve. Letters and figures can be made to work together productively for a creative result.

Insights on culture as well as management are spread out in six well mapped out sections: Times and Places, Rituals and Celebrations, Past and Present, Artists and Craftsmen, Possessions, People Words and Numbers. Each section in turn bristles with notes not only on culture but also on history, narrative, descriptive, retrospective pieces which were written at various times and occasions from the early 1980s until the present.

The writer, indeed, must be nothing short of a renaissance man equipped with an amount of savoir faire, a vast knowledge of the humanities and management, product not only of an apparently innate love for both but a well spread out professional background and experience involving both. Laya served as chair of the board of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and held many other key positions not only in the government but also in top private firms.

Natural passion

And quite significantly, there is something in his genes which makes writing for him a natural passion as well as skill. He is, after all, the grandson of Juan C. Laya, whose first novel, "His Native Soil," is taken up in classes of Philippine literature and which won the Commonwealth Literary Award for fiction in 1940.

If all informative materials involving all kinds of disciplines and fields of human interest are grist to any writer's mill, then this book is surely a must for all writers, and for all readers for that matter, a national treasury that must be a part of every Filipino reader's reading fare.

The data and statistics are massive but not unwieldy since they had been organized and compiled by the able hand of one efficient organization man. In one book, pertinent data about the country's sociocultural history are made available and accessible providing a visual treat and evocative feel of the country through fleeting etchings of Philippine scenarios and snatches of seeming trivia. It is a veritable return to tradition through Philippine history and culture served with a dash of storytelling effervescence which makes the reading not only informative but also pleasurable.

Consider the topics: Intramuros, its history, death and eventual restoration; Malacañang in its various stages of power and pomp as it changes hands from one political era to another; Manila, the Black Nazarene of Quiapo, the Pagoda at Bocaue, portraits, Ang Kiukok and others, antique hunting in Ermita, priceless possessions, hidden treasures and pleasures. These are just a random ticking off of the numerous subjects of this delectable feast, spared of the occasional slapdash of journalism, the cold rendering of history, the whimsy of literature and the austere erudition of plain research.

Sidetracking

There is this romantic sidetracking into this incident of 15-year-old José Rizal riding out on horseback to the Calamba crossroads just to catch a glimpse of the "alluring and enchanting" Segunda Katigbak on the way by carriage to Lipa from Manila's Colegio de la Concordia. He raises his hat, she looks at him and waves and rides on and out of the young man's sight and life.

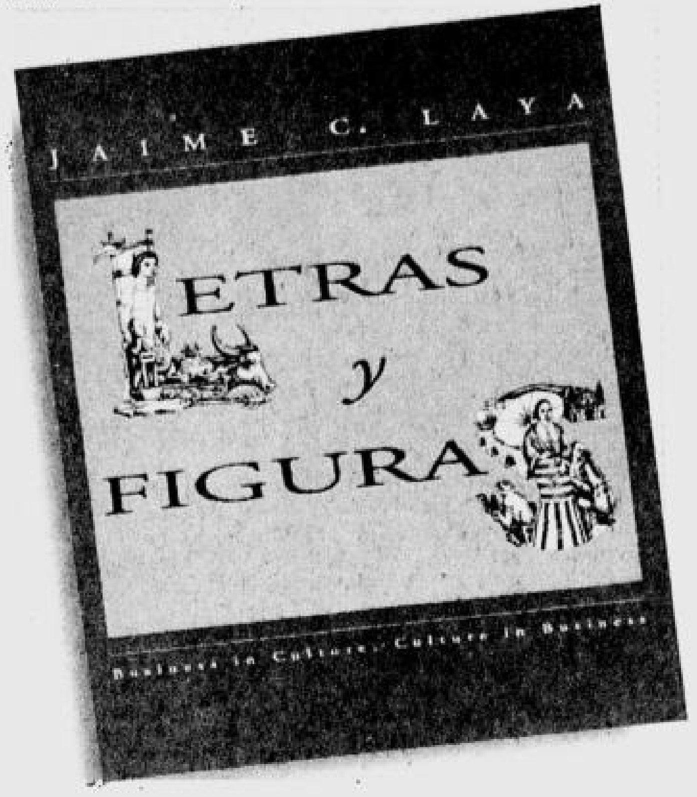
And then, the Tadtarin rites which, according to the writer, have now turned more Dionysian and orgiastic, with the image of San Juan Bautista staggering tipsily with the celebrants (a religious ritual with pagan elements which inspired National Artist Nick Joaquin's "Summer Soltice").

Autobiographical notes about the author's house on Karapatan Street abound with intimate details. It's a truly delightful reading in which one gets to share these divagations of heart into the past.

The artist and his lonely, personal art, the manager and his corporate, money-oriented ventures and strategies; critical acclaim on one hand, financial success on the other hand. The two are different, according to Dr.Laya, marching to different rhythms and tunes as they move on to their separate goals. But ideally, the artist must also at times excel in management and organization, and the manager-businessman must be himself creative and cultured.

This book is a reinscribing, not necessarily a deconstructing of hierarchies. The idea is to form a correspondence through a competent symbiotic relationship. Management has to be humanistic and humane; the artist must straddle both the world of imaginative, creative idealism and practical reality.

The statement is simple, its implications resounding. Surely this is what is imperative in a shoddy world of crass and stark dichotomies where usually the head is made to stride briskly on with the heart lagging miles behind, and vice-versa.



A 'Life' extraordinary

A Life Shaped by Music: Andrea Ofilada Veneracion and the Philippine Madrigal Singers
By Marjorie Evasco
The Bookmark Inc., Makati, 2001
343 pages

By Ruel S. de Vera

ANDREA Veneracion

This handsome book is a poetic chronicle of a National Artist and the choir that changed Philippine music

REVIEW

"IN THAT moment of time and space when the human voice becomes the instrument of music, the atmosphere is charged with an ancient listening memory which creates a space within—a resonant place where the rhythmic articulation of sound is, and will always be, the beginning of human meaningfulness."

Much-awarded poet Marjorie Evasco writes this near the beginning of "A Life Shaped by Music: Andrea Ofilada Veneracion and the Philippine Madrigal Singers," a handsome volume that eloquently chronicles the life of a National Artist and the rise of the choir that changed Philippine music. For almost four decades, Professor Veneracion and the Madrigals have been conjuring musical magic by raising choir music to the highest level possible. "A Life Shaped by Music" recalls that journey, and lets readers in on the inner workings of this top-notch choir.

In evocative passages and lovely language, Evasco traces the Madrigal story from Veneracion's birth in 1928. With a mother who managed a music store, Veneracion took quickly to the musical arts (she was also a top-caliber varsity swimmer at the University of the Philippines). She will eventually take on the formidable task of becoming a top musical talent as well as fall in love and marry. Veneracion, of course, proved triumphant in her quest as a soloist and returns to the Philippines later on, giving birth to what would become the Philippine's top choir in 1963.

As a teacher at the UP College of Music, Veneracion would gather teachers and students during lunchtime to sing madrigals (hence the name). From that humble beginning, the UP Madrigal Singers (also known as the Madz, a nickname coined, interestingly enough, by INQUIRER music guru Antonio Hila) would take the country—and then the world—by lyrical storm.

Traveling all over the world, winning awards and performing in front of prominent people, the Madrigals basically put Philippine choirs on the map. The book records the chorus's many tours. Beyond that, "Life" takes the reader into the inner sanctum of the Madrigals, so that one finds out exactly how one becomes, and what it means to be, a Madrigal singer. From the semicircle arrangement and focused mindset to the rigorous trial process and rehearsals, Evasco shows with distinctive insight the length and breadth of what it takes to become a member of this top choir. Yet she also captures the humor on and off stage, such as when former President Marcos instructed aides to invite the Madrigals for golf—and got the bewildered singers on the presidential yacht instead.

It is also notable how well documented the book is, from the passages to the voluminous photographs and posters that depict "Life's" story from Veneracion's youth to her being named National Artist for Music. In fact, the book also carries a complete list of Madrigal singers, past and present, a listing of awards won, tour itineraries, concert venues and even samples of their well-known choral pieces. "Life" thus achieves its intention of becoming, in effect, the definitive guide to the Madz themselves.

Evasco fluidly tells the story of the Madrigals woven firmly with that of Veneracion, for the two have become synonymous with one another. An important addition to the still-growing body of writing about our nation's music, "Life" tells not only how the Madrigals climbed to the top of local and international music, but also how Andrea Ofilada Veneracion has made an indelible impact on Philippine music. It is a book about music that truly sings.

Available in hardcover and soft cover at The Filipino Bookstore and Bookmark branches

New history book adopts fresh perspective

SINAG-TALA Publishers has released "The History of the Filipino People for High Schools" by Paul A. Dumol with Ernesto Grio.

The new book adopts new perspectives (principally, the transformation of the inhabitants of the Philippine archipelago from a collection of villages to a single nation) and steers away from certain old ones (principally, from the narrative viewpoints of Manila or of the Tagalogs). It ends with People Power 2 and situates it in the development of a democratic civic culture.

This is also a new textbook of Philippine history from the point of view of format, incorporating marginal notes, inserts, vocabulary words, terms and concepts, names and places, critical thinking exercises and abundant suggestions for research and discussion, together with illustrations. It is enriched by the insights of current research, filled with interesting photographs which relive the drama of the last century and a half-indelibly inscribed in the Filipino culture.

The principal author has taught Philippine history to high school students for many years. At present, Dr. Dumol is the dean of the School of Education of the University of Asia and the Pacific, of which he is also the vice president for academic affairs. He holds a doctorate degree in medieval studies from the University of Toronto in Canada. Dumol is also a well-known playwright.

Copies of the book are now available at Sinag-tala Publishers (897-1161/62) and at all National Bookstore branches at P180 (book paper) and P170 (newsprint).

9th Iligan National Writers Workshop makes call for manuscripts

THE MINDANAO Creative Writers Group and the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Extension (OVCRE) of the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) are holding the 9th Iligan National Writers Workshop (INWW) on May 23-28. They will also hold a one-day seminar on the teaching of Philippine literature on May 25.

The workshop is now accepting applications for fellowships. Fifteen slots—five each from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao—are available for the writing fellowships.

Applicants are required to submit five poems or one short story, or a one-act play in Cebuano, Filipino, English, Tausug and Maranao (with English translation) along with the applicant's letter with a certification that his/her work is original, biodata and 2x2" photo. For short stories or plays, submit a hard copy and a 3.5 diskette with the manuscripts encoded in MS Word 6.0 or 7.0. Unpublished works are preferred and applicants who have attended regional workshops where applicable will also be given preference.

Writing fellows will be given free board and lodging, honoraria and travel allowance. Applicants are advised to keep copies of their manuscripts since these will not be returned.

Applications must be postmarked on or before March 30. No applications or manuscripts will be accepted if sent by fax or e-mail.

One hundred slots are available for high school and college literature teachers from Mindanao in the seminar. There will be a registration fee of P1,000 to cover seminar kit, lunch, snacks and the textbook—"Filipinos Writing, Philippine Literature from the Regions," edited by Bienvenido Lumbera and published by Anvil Publishers.

Send all applications to the 9th INWW Director, Christine Godinez-Ortega, OVCRE, MSU-IIT, Iligan City. Call project coordinator Pat Cruz at telefax (063) 351-6131 or e-mail ovcre-mepc@sulat.msuiit.edu.ph.

Rio Alma pays tribute to Alejandro Abadilla, launches new poetry collection

VIRGILIO Almario a.k.a. "Rio Alma"

ALEJANDRO G. Abadilla is undisputedly the father of modernism in Tagalog poetry, but very few know he took up philosophy at the University of Santo Tomas. It was after he completed his AB in 1931 that he launched his "Talaang Bughaw," a monthly list of the best published stories and poems, which, in effect, started his career as a controversial critic and an avant-garde writer.

In this light, the UST Center for Creative Writing and Studies is commemorating the 96th birth anniversary of Abadilla with a lecture by eminent poet-critic Virgilio S. Almario on March 8, 4 p.m., at the center's workshop-seminar room, St. Raymond's Building (AB Commerce). Almario aims to situate Abadilla's pioneering efforts within the general current, which he calls "*modernismo*" in Philippine literatures, brought about by the American occupation. The lecture is open to the public.

Almario's lecture also precedes the launching of his 10th collection of poems, "Supot ni Hudas." The book is published by the UST Publishing House.

What's your brand?

From page E1

Here in the Philippines, an excellent example would be San Miguel, which has cultivated its name very well and attached it direct, to at least three products—Pale Pilsen, Light and Super Dry.

"Brands are made up of three parts: the body, the soul and the conscience." The body, Batey explains, represents what is tangible about your brand—the product developments that consumers can see and feel.

The soul, on the other hand, represents the emotional side of your brand offering. "It is deep-rooted and mirrors the unique character, personality and culture of your brand."

The brand's conscience represents the company's corporate "payback" responsibility to specific target consumers, or to the public at large.

Mistakes

According to Batey, it is in the brand's soul that most marketers and advertisers commonly make mistakes. These people should not be too eager to change just so they can look modern.

That would be "like getting Frank Sinatra to sing like Elvis Presley and *then* like Pavarotti, just to be trendy. Getting the brand's soul right is not an easy task, but once you've nailed it, it need not essentially change for decades."

San Miguel, for instance, has been around since 1890.

Batey writes animatedly about his "disparate experiences and views" which he dismisses as no "Einstein revelations." But they turn out to be practical guidance for advertising and marketing executives. He questions the importance of research and argues that marketing departments should anticipate customer needs, not simply react to surveys.

The book also takes readers behind the scenes and makes case studies out of popular Asian brands like Shangri-La Hotels, Tiger Beer and United Overseas Bank. There are also several reprints of print advertisements which the author believes embodies correct brand-building, and a section on how Raffles Hotel in Singapore was saved from destruction to become one of the greatest brand names in the world.

"Asian Branding" is a definitive guide to building power brands in Asia and is a must-read for those who seriously want to participate in Asia's boom.

Lecture on ethics and literature

POET-CRITIC Ophelia Alcantara Dimalanta delivers the Jaka Professorial Lecture on "Ethics and Literature" on March 7, 2 p.m., at the audiovisual room of the Faculty of Arts and Letters of the University of Santo Tomas. The public is invited.

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Dominic Mascrinas
Operations Head
American Express Intl.Phils.

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Earl Montero
Banker

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Commissioner- Phil. Sports Commission

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Rachelle Vanessa Dy Sun Ng
AVP-Supplies & Services Management Division
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Rene Reinoso
SVP- Sales & Marketing
Philippine Daily Inquirer

"World-class quality education from a premier Australian university that gives you that competitive edge."

Froilan Tejada III
Director and Consultant
Business Sense, Inc.

"The program offered a unique opportunity to experience the global reality through the wealth of international business experience and cultural diversity of professors and students. I call on my fellow graduates to take the challenge of steering the Philippine economy toward real development."

After 15 months of intensive weekend, classroom-based study, 17 MBA students are going to see their Alma Mater for the first time. The students are flying to Australia in March to attend the graduation ceremonies and receive their MBA Degrees.

Murdoch University of Perth, Western Australia, will be conferring the degree. Awarded the highest grade in graduate satisfaction for five consecutive years by the independent Australian Good Universities Guide, Murdoch was founded in 1975 as a research-based university. Murdoch now has over 12,000 students on campus and another 400 receiving international quality education in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Beijing.

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The Esteban School, a member of the European Council of International Schools and the Education Partner of Murdoch University in the Philippines, commends the graduating batch for their hard work and dedication. Special felicitations to Mr. Froilan Tejada, who earned High Distinction in all his subjects, a first achievement in any offshore program within Asia.

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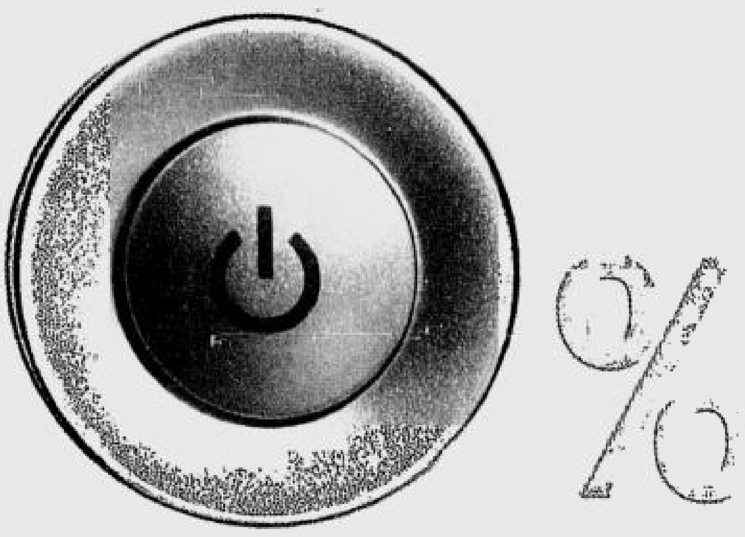

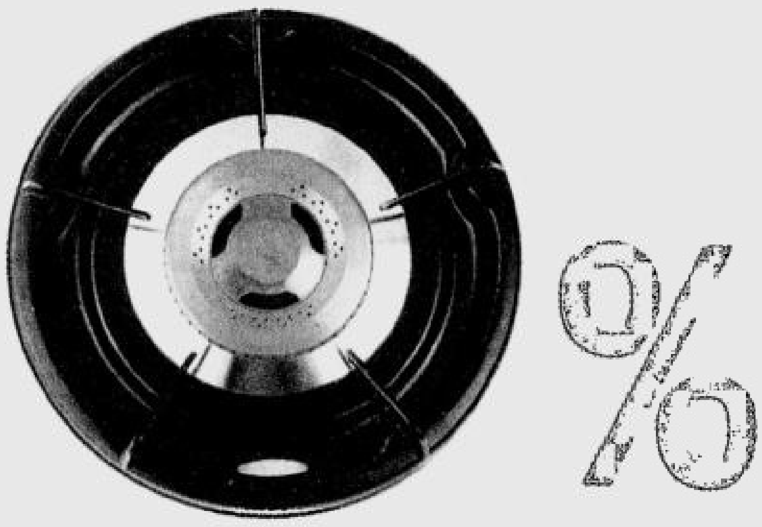

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INFOTECH

Editor Leo Magno

Let the games begin!

Enough about the Xbox hardware. We got game.

Genma Onimusha:

Slicing edge

By Leo Magno

BEFORE I bought Genma Onimusha, I checked out the reviews first and read the comparison between the PlayStation 2 version (titled Onimusha: Warlords). All of them said the Xbox version rocks. The reviewers say Genma has a longer playing time, more demons to defeat, enemies are harder to kill and the environment is bigger than that of Warlords.

I got Genma Onimusha for P3,200 in Greenhills, where Xbox games are priced at either P3,800, P3,500, P3,200 or P3,000. Imagine my regret when, the next day, I saw the same title in Data Blitz in Makati for only P2,995. PS2 titles are about the same price, but they now sell pirated PS2 games for only P400 in Greenhills and

GENMA/ F3

THRILL-O-METER
Genma Onimusha

- **Gameplay**—a mixture of the storyline and the creativity of the game
- **Playability**—is the game difficult to control and are there portions of it that don't make sense?
- **Video**—a mixture of the graphics, rendering, animated movements, cutaway scenes and movies found in the game
- **Audio**—the background music, voice characterization, sound effects and how they enhance the mood of the game
- **Replay value**—is this a game you can and would want to play over and over again?
- **Ooomph**—that certain X-factor which makes you wanna own the game

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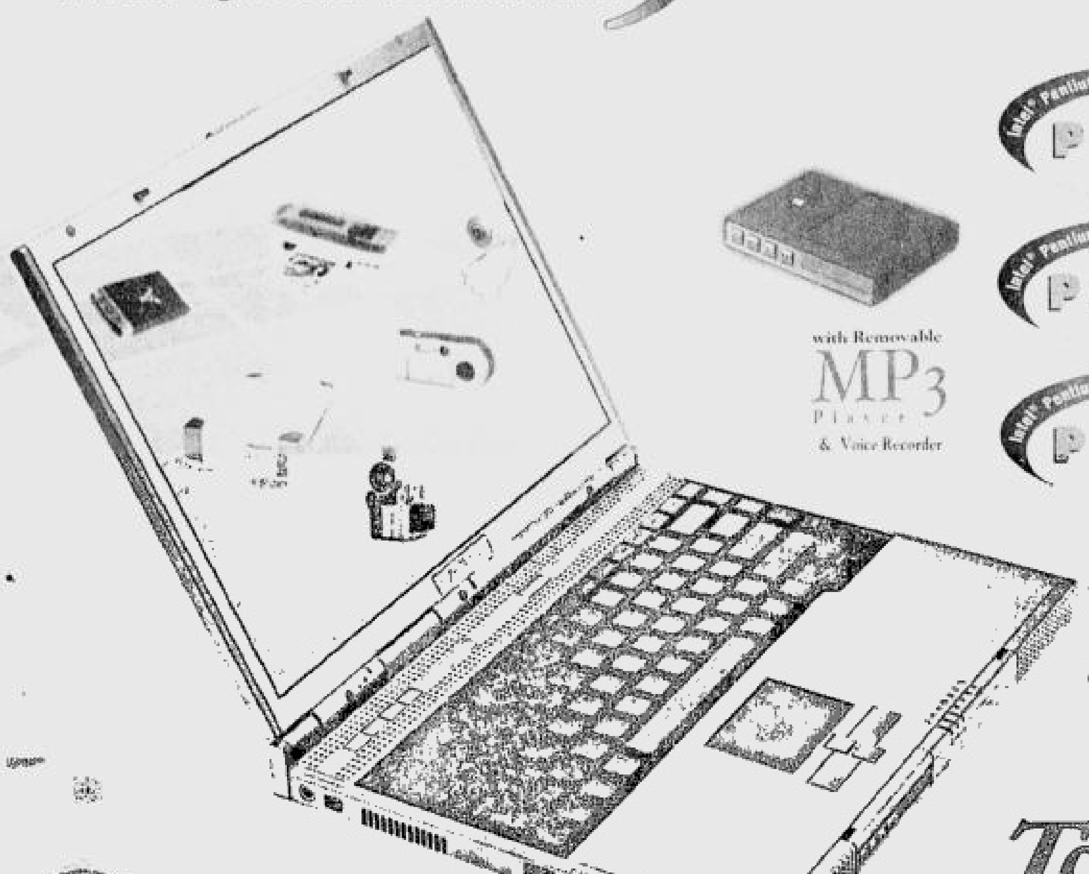

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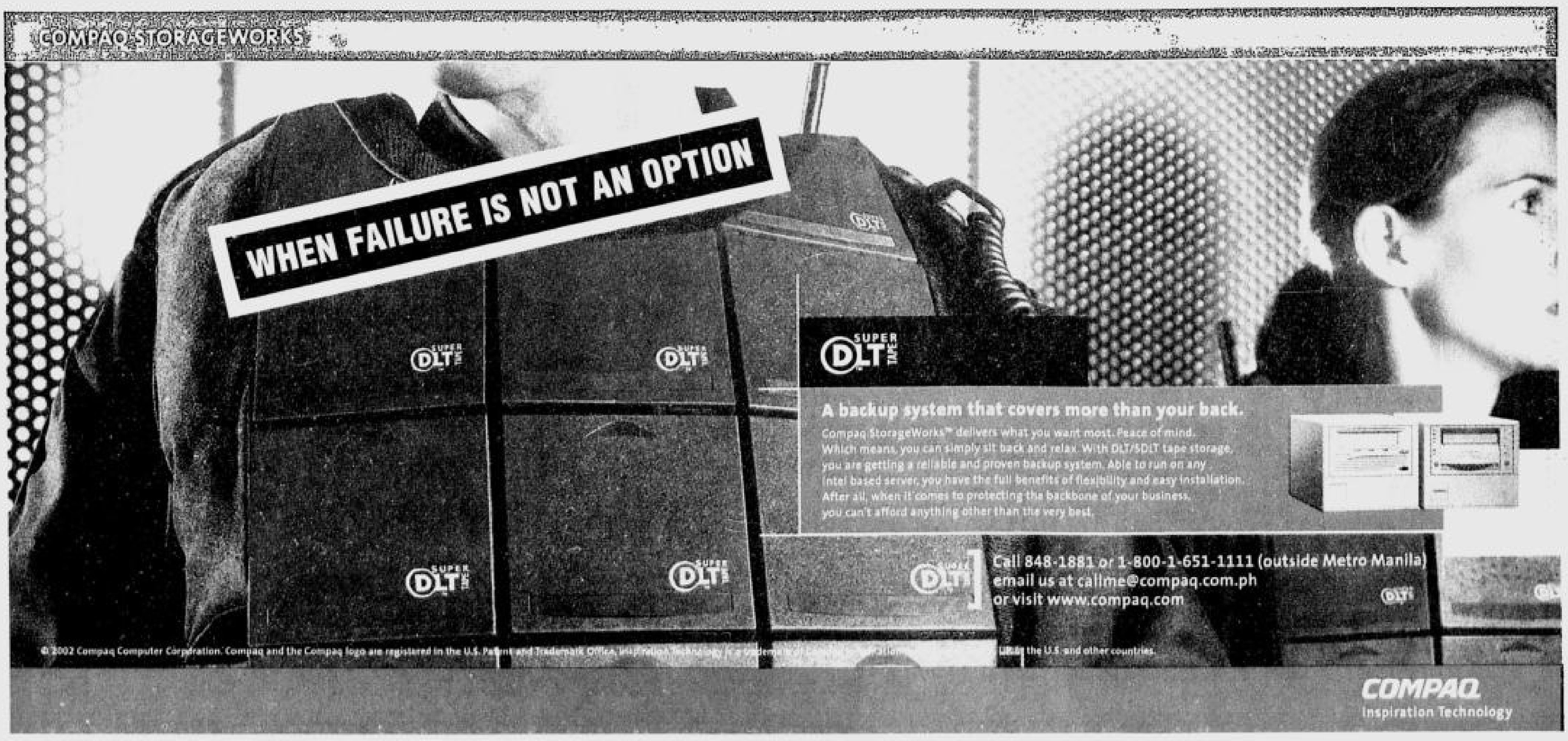

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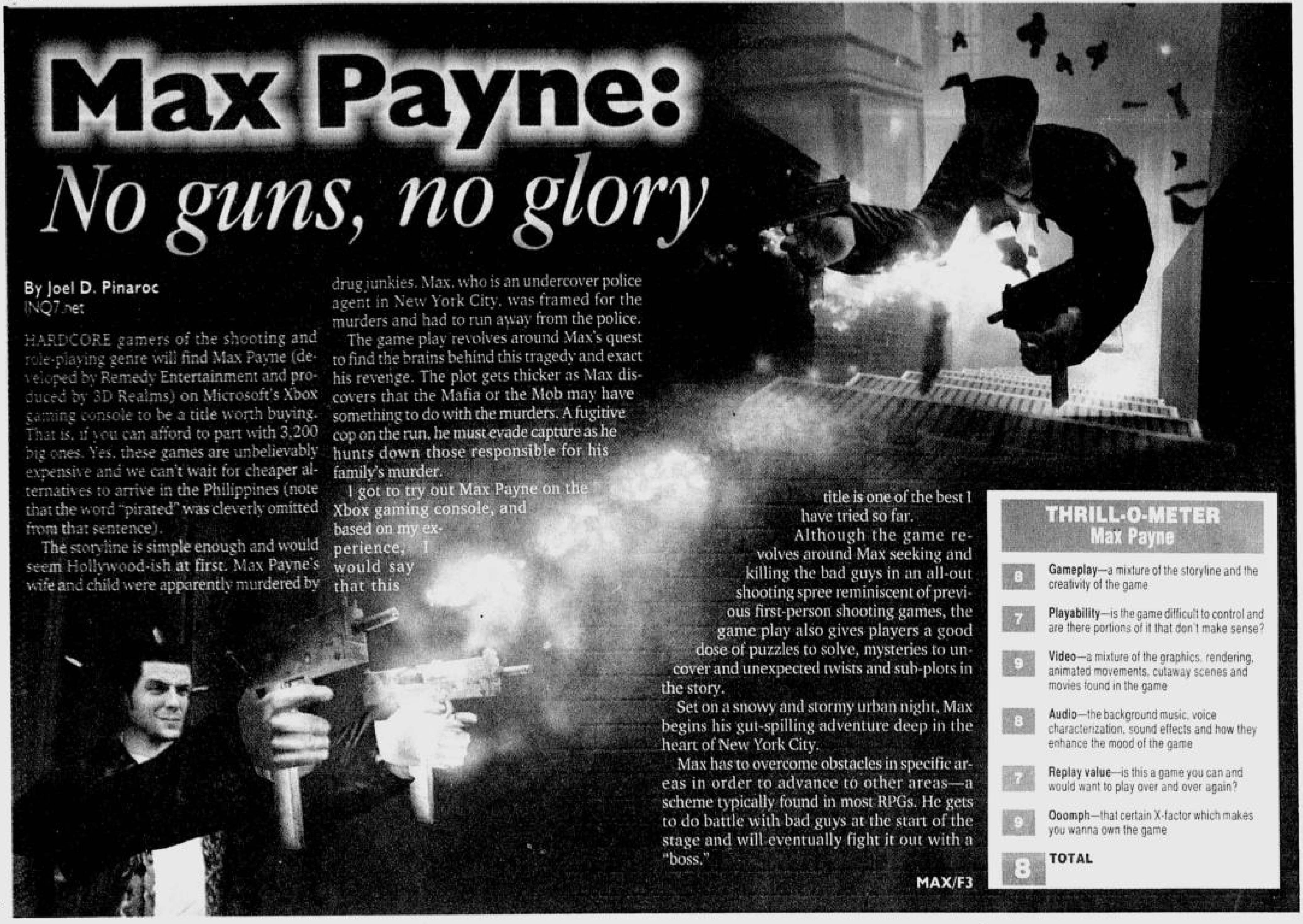


Max Payne: *No guns, no glory*

By Joel D. Pinaroc
INQ7.net

HARDCORE gamers of the shooting and role-playing genre will find Max Payne (developed by Remedy Entertainment and produced by 3D Realms) on Microsoft's Xbox gaming console to be a title worth buying. That is, if you can afford to part with 3,200 big ones. Yes, these games are unbelievably expensive and we can't wait for cheaper alternatives to arrive in the Philippines (note that the word "pirated" was cleverly omitted from that sentence).

The storyline is simple enough and would seem Hollywood-ish at first. Max Payne's wife and child were apparently murdered by drug junkies. Max, who is an undercover police agent in New York City, was framed for the murders and had to run away from the police.

The game play revolves around Max's quest to find the brains behind this tragedy and exact his revenge. The plot gets thicker as Max discovers that the Mafia or the Mob may have something to do with the murders. A fugitive cop on the run, he must evade capture as he hunts down those responsible for his family's murder.

I got to try out Max Payne on the Xbox gaming console, and based on my experience, I would say that this title is one of the best I have tried so far.

Although the game revolves around Max seeking and killing the bad guys in an all-out shooting spree reminiscent of previous first-person shooting games, the game play also gives players a good dose of puzzles to solve, mysteries to uncover and unexpected twists and sub-plots in the story.

Set on a snowy and stormy urban night, Max begins his gut-spilling adventure deep in the heart of New York City.

Max has to overcome obstacles in specific areas in order to advance to other areas—a scheme typically found in most RPGs. He gets to do battle with bad guys at the start of the stage and will eventually fight it out with a "boss."

MAX/F3

THRILL-O-METER
Max Payne

8	**Gameplay**—a mixture of the storyline and the creativity of the game
7	**Playability**—is the game difficult to control and are there portions of it that don't make sense?
9	**Video**—a mixture of the graphics, rendering, animated movements, cutaway scenes and movies found in the game
8	**Audio**—the background music, voice characterization, sound effects and how they enhance the mood of the game
7	**Replay value**—is this a game you can and would want to play over and over again?
9	**Ooomph**—that certain X-factor which makes you wanna own the game
8	**TOTAL**

Online games ongoing

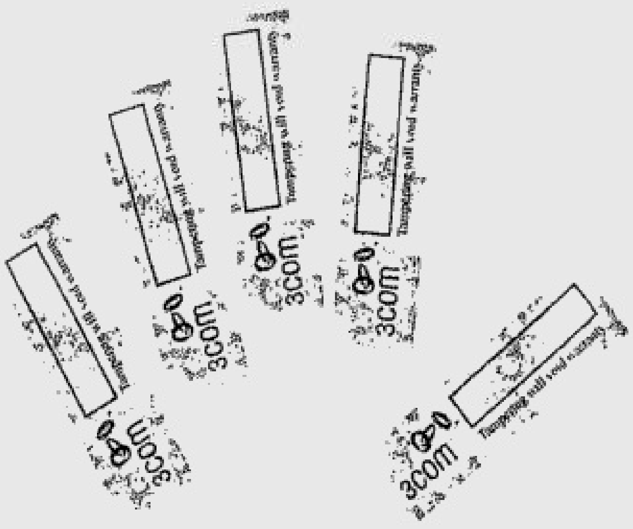
ONLINE warriors still have time to catch up as the online elimination round of The New Pinoybattle.Net Counter-Strike tournament is ongoing till June 2. The new Pinoybattle.Net Counter-Strike tournament is a single player tournament and not team based. This tournament has two parts: Online Elimination and the Face-Off.

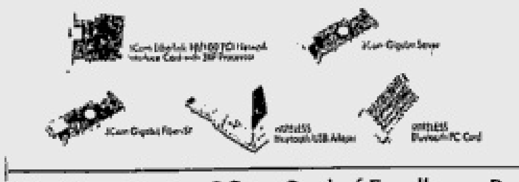
Each player needs the following to play the Online Elimination Round: Counter-Strike version 1.3, a modem, personal computer with graphics card adequate for playing, anti-cheat software and the Pinoybattle.Net Prepaid Card. Then register at www.pinoybattle.net to be an eligible Tournament Player.

Each player's skills will be calculated and ranked accordingly. To qualify as a finalist, the player must be one of the top 16 scorers at the end of the online tournament period; have an average playing time of 50 hours or more per month in the tournament game server.

Afterwards, the top 16 players will compete in the Face-Off Round. They also get the chance to be featured in YOU, the interactive youth portal of INQ7.net (www.you.inq7.net) with their picture and profile. During the whole period of the Online Elimination Round, the statistics of the players' skills can be viewed in the Pinoybattle.Net website and in YOU.

Part two of the tournament is the Face-Off round which will be held on June 8. The top 16 players will meet and compete to be the last man standing in the PinoyBattle.Net Counter-Strike Tournament 2002 and P15,000 as the Grand Prize. The winner will also be featured in YOU and the Pinoybattle.Net website.





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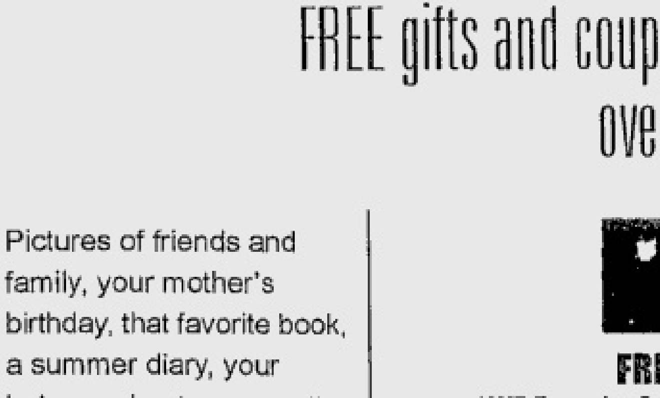

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Genma Onimusha: Slicing edge

From page F1

P200 in SM Megamall. Without feigning respect to intellectual property rights, I simply can't wait for pirated Xbox games to arrive in the Philippines.

But the P3,200 were well worth it. Genma Onimusha did not disappoint. Starting from the excellently rendered opening movie to the equally impressive cutaway scenes all the way to the game's final battle with Fortinbras and the closing movie—this game is not just a ninja-slasher game. It's an engaging, challenging adventure with an intriguing storyline you can play again and again.

But let's start with the basics.

Genma Onimusha is a game from Japan's Capcom, maker of Resident Evil, Street Fighter and Devil May Cry (if Capcom tested the Xbox waters with Onimusha, chances are Resident Evil and Devil May Cry, both available on the PS2, may not be far behind). It is a third-person role-playing game (RPG) which also falls in the action and survival-horror genre.

You play Samanosuke Akechi, a ronin samurai off to save Princess Yuki from a herd of demons plaguing the Saito clan. The demons are collectively known as Oni, so your goal is to slice the hell out of the Oni to get to Fortinbras and Nobunaga Oda, a warlord resurrected by the demons (watch the opening movie for the real cool battle scene and the arrow which pierces Oda's throat).

The start of the game is laden with cut scenes, so sit back and enjoy the movies. After a while you end up in a place called Nanamagari and start slashing away at ninja zombies and hunchback ninjas. The game is very playable, with the system leading you to automatically attack the nearest enemy. What makes the game more interesting is that Samanosuke collects "souls" emitted by the demons once you kill them. There are four different souls you can absorb in the Xbox version of this game, whereas the PS2 version only has three. The fourth soul, the green one, is contested by Samanosuke and the demons around him, leading to a tug-of-war for souls. If a demon absorbs the soul before Samanosuke does, it goes berserk and becomes more difficult to kill.

You also get to switch control between Samanosuke and Kaede, a konuichi (female ninja) who accompanies you on the mission. You get to fight and solve puzzles alternately with Kaede, making the game more interesting. There are a lot of puzzles in Genma Onimusha, and most of them are different from those found in the PS2 version (trust me, I tried the cheat codes but they didn't work).

As you move on to the underground temple, then on to the Keep, the Keep underground, the South area, the East area and eventually into the Dark Realm, you'll discover that this game is not linear. Other games lead you from one stage to another until you face the Big Boss. This one has you moving from one area to another, solving puzzles to enter another area and going back to locked doors which you could not access earlier in the game. This makes Genma more interesting.

While going through these different vast environments of the game, you get to pick up weapons hidden here and there. Three of them—the Kaizan, the Shippuu and Enryuu—need to be enhanced at Magic Mirrors found throughout the different maps. These mirrors also act as save points (you can't quick save just any time in the game; you have to go to a Magic Mirror). As you enhance your weapons, you get to kill monsters easily, gain magic powers and gain access to mysterious doors.

The Oni in Genma are pretty challenging. One feedback PS2 users gave Capcom was that the demons in Onimusha: Warlords were easy to kill. In Genma, they're pretty difficult to defeat, making the game more challenging. You'll encounter such demons as Reynaldo, Marcellus, big and ugly mothers with tusks, predator-like samurais, steamrolling fat demons, muscle-bound gatekeepers armed with heavy weapons and the king of demons himself—Fortinbras. However, the one I really hate in this game is that eerie, small spinning Japanese doll with scissors for hands. I was never able to beat that a-hole; all I did was try my best to run away from it.

I beat the game in a little more than seven hours in terms of game time, but I actually spent about 20 hours all in all. Still, I'm playing the game again, this time with the Japanese voices on (the English voice dubbing is irritating) accompanied by English subtitles.

The video and graphics in Genma are superb, and the audio is very Japanese and fits the game—sometimes creepy, sometimes action-packed (there's even an Onimusha soundtrack on CD, and it's getting rave reviews).

The game is imaginitive, meticulously detailed, has a good plot, has challenging enemies and puzzles, easy to control and is not too long. Plus the fact that you can slice and dice demonic ninjas with blood splattering everywhere.

All in all, Genma Onimusha is worth my P3,200. It's quite an experience I'd go through again and again.

Max Payne . . .

From page F2

The actual shooting experience is mind-blowing to say the least, as the gun battles are the focus and the main draw of the game. Blood and gore abound as you shoot enemies that—thanks to en excellent artificial intelligence (AI) controlling enemies' actions—can also dodge and shoot back.

As Max Payne, you get to pick up and choose the weapon you will use against your enemies, from a simple steel pipe to a sniper's rifle that comes complete with the telescopic sight and the cross-hair.

Aside from the rifle, you get to pick up the standard Beretta, the pump-action shotgun, a double-barreled, sawed-off shotgun, a Desert Eagle hand gun and an Ingram sub-machine gun, among others, as you progress.

My personal favorites are the dual Berettas and the dual Ingrams that allow you to fire from both hands—pretty useful especially when you're barging into blind alleys and corridors and finding out that your enemies outnumber you six-to-one.

While going gung-ho and acting like you're bullet-proof may sometimes work in your favor, your enemies are not stationary and can counter your attacks.

It is not all guns for you however, as certain stages of the game would require you to outwit and not outgun your enemies. For example, you'll be equipped merely with a baseball bat to battle a troop of shotgun-toting bad guys.

Aside from the size and power of the gun you're shooting with, one weapon you can use is "bullet-time," the move that allows you to simultaneously dodge and shoot your enemies in "slow motion." Think of the movie "The Matrix" and the slow motion bullet-dodging scene.

The graphics seen in Max Payne are also excellent in general. The falling snow, the photo-digitized faces of the lead characters and the above-mentioned slow motion effects are astounding.

In bullet time, you get to see the bullets whiz past you, or if you get hit, see the bullets rip through your black leather jacket. You also get to see the bullets penetrate the body of an enemy, producing a red mist in their wake. You will even see the grimace on the faces of Max Payne and his enemies as the bullets hit on impact.

This is a parental guidance (PG) title, and as expected, the game comes with a generous amount of virtual violence and detailed gore.

Another plus for this game is the high level of realism of Max Payne's urban surroundings.

You can open cabinets, drawers and lockers. Turn on the sink and you have running water from the faucet. You can flush the toilet and hear that familiar gurgling sound. Drop a coin in a vending machine and a soda can will fall. Shoot the can and you will see the soda spring out like a fountain. Turn on the television to catch the news. Open a truck's door to find something useful.

Need to target-practice? Shoot at a lamplight and you'll see the sparks. Shoot at a wall with a sawed-off shotgun and you'll create a hole the size of your fists. Shoot at a wad of money to see pieces of paper bills flying all over the place. In other words, even the non-essential elements of the game are interactive. They're not just graphics plastered over the background environment.

As much as the game excels in the actual game play and realism, there are features which I find wanting. First, some of the graphics, including the actual characters seem to be "flat" at certain angles. You'll still see the rough edges and in some instances, some of the characters appear too thin and disproportionate, like stick figures.

Second, unlike most games based on the DVD platform, Max Payne does not extensively use cut scenes or computer generated movies, typically found to augment and enhance the game play. Save for a few clips, the game's story line is mostly broken down by comic strip-like scenes, showing Max Payne and some characters talking to each other via thought balloons, although a voice-over is also added.

Last, and probably the most trivial, are the controls. Being used to using the directional pad for some of the Xbox titles, it took me some time to learn to use the two analog thumb sticks—placed diagonally from each other—to move, aim and shoot.

Overall, Max Payne makes for an immersive and engaging game for the teenage to mature set, allowing players to play out their innermost desire to play cops and robbers in a totally different and often violent, dimension.

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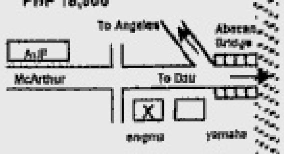

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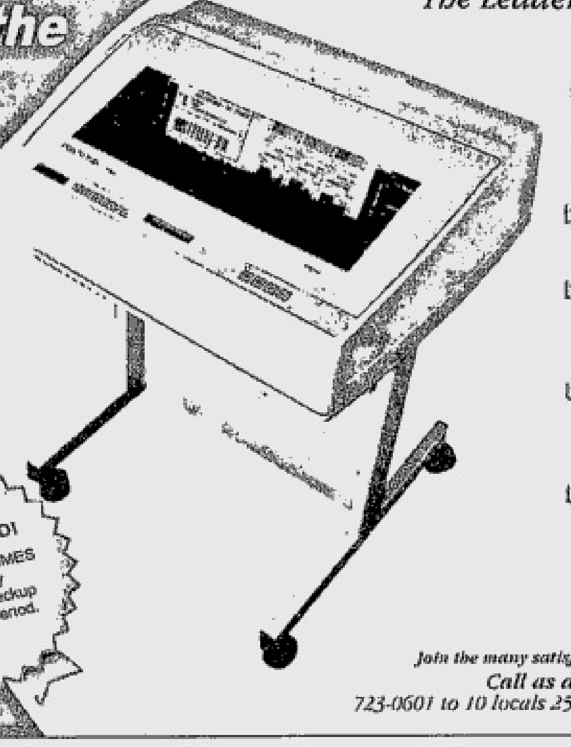

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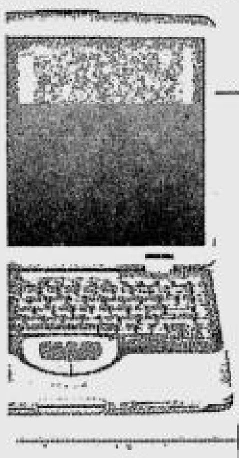

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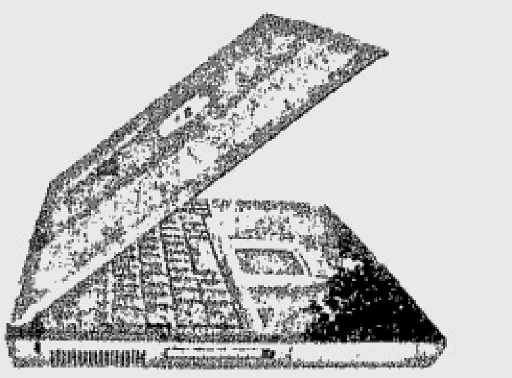

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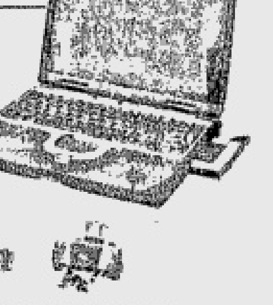

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Nintendo targets 4M units by end-March

JAPANESE video game maker Nintendo Co. Ltd. intends to meet its original target of shipping 4 million of its GameCube game consoles by the end of its fiscal year in March, its head designer said.

Nintendo had said in December it might increase global shipments by as much as 13 percent, mostly in the United States, because of strong holiday sales. Shigeru Miyamoto, an international legend in the game industry who is in the United States on a promotional tour, said the company still planned to ship 2.1 million units in the United States and 1.9 million in Japan by March 31.

Miyamoto, whose formal title is director and general manager of Nintendo's entertainment analysis and development division, said he recently was in Europe, apologizing to game industry press and analysts for GameCube's late shipment there. The console's European launch is set for May 3. GameCube was introduced in Japan in September and in the United States in November.

Amid great fanfare, Nintendo last year launched GameCube, a high-powered video game console that vies with Sony Corp.'s PlayStation 2 and Microsoft Corp.'s Xbox for a piece of the nearly $10-billion US game market.

Last week Nintendo said it would work with two other game industry companies to manufacture a graphics board based on the GameCube's hardware, with an eye toward commercializing the technology in other game consoles. *Reuters*

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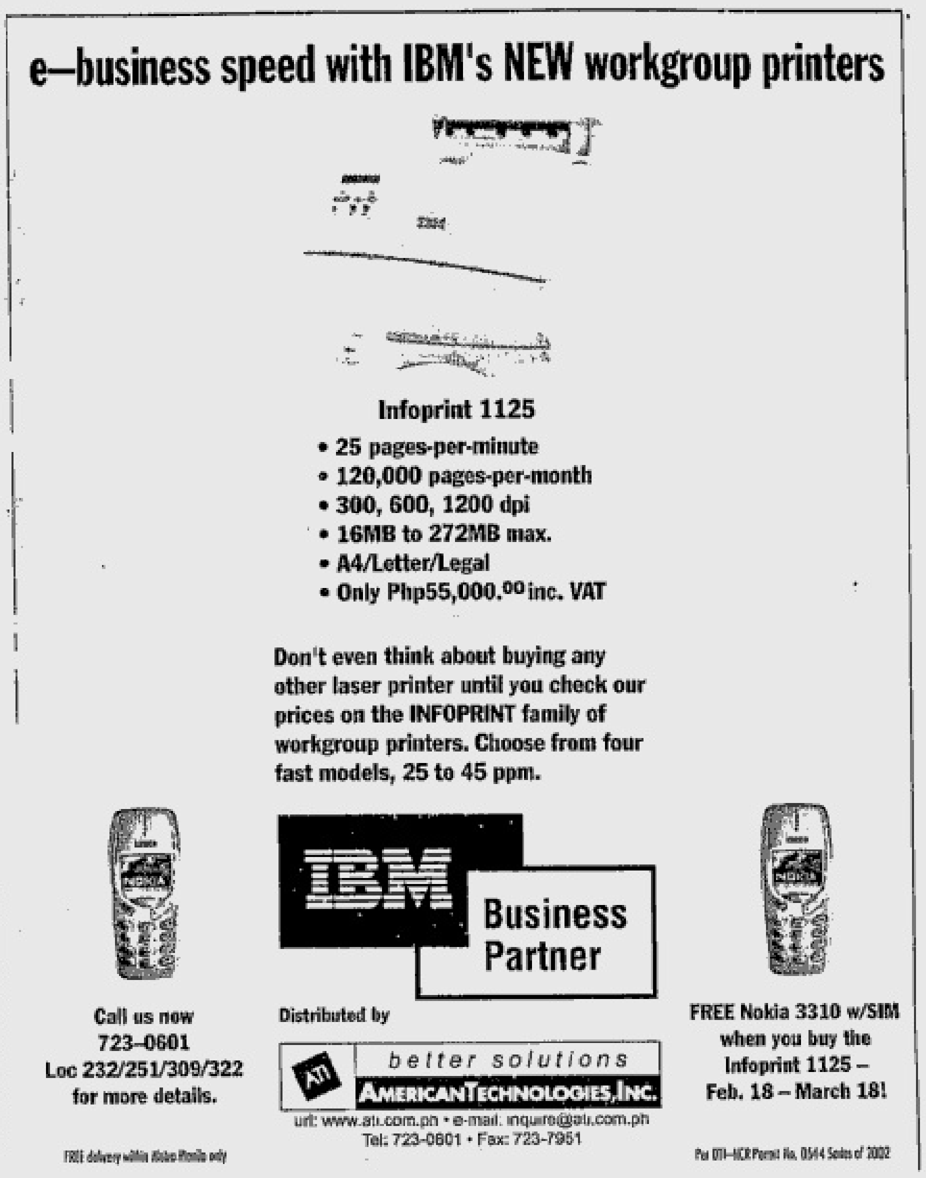

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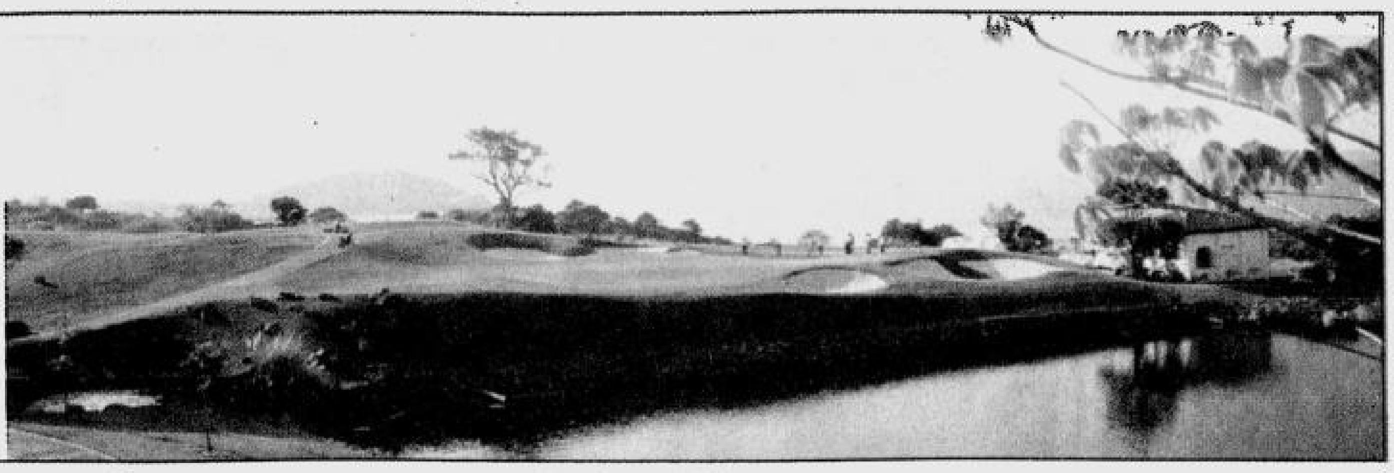
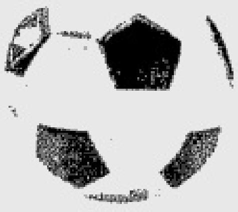


TEAM LANDCO: 12 YEARS
On A Winning Streak



Maverick property developer Landco Pacific bucks the trend with an aggressive strategy that has them scoring goal after goal.

Standing:
Francis V. Ceballos, EVP and COO;
Antonio V. Syyap, AVP;
Sindulfo L. Sumagang, VP and CFO;
Patrick A. Villano, VP
Seated: Arlene G. Magtibay, VP;
Alfred Xerez-Burgos Jr., President & CEO

If business were a game and football were its name, then upstart property developer Landco Pacific would be one of its scrappiest teams.

The real estate powerhouse has been quietly but deliberately building an unbeaten home record on the field, managing to rollover tough competition—and even tougher economic conditions—to score goal after goal.

In a region where both property values and prospects have forced other companies to take a defensive stance, Landco Pacific has bucked the trend by honing an aggressive strategy that has allowed it to become one of the few companies to post positive growth in revenues and profits in the last years. Landco's enviable return-to-equity ratio has allowed it to shave off more than a billion pesos in debt from its balance sheets in the last 12 months alone.

"It's all about converting possession and stringing passes together to achieve a better scoring position," grins President and CEO Alfred Xerez-Burgos, Jr. Indeed, for this former player of the Philippine football team, playing a good game is the ultimate test.

Team Landco's strategy has been equally forthright: Zero in on previously untapped property markets and put the right portfolio of projects on the field. Burgos states "Our choice of kick-off projects has given us the needed momentum to stay on course."

First of its enterprises was Peninsula de Punta Fuego located in Nasugbu, Batangas, targeted at the most affluent and demanding segment of the property market. "The project was a remarkable challenge for us," says Burgos, "and it was thanks to the efforts of our team that we have been able to produce 100% disposal of our land inventory." The success of this flagship project has set the pace for the company's strategy, which has let it outshoot competition. In the pipeline is follow-up project Las Terrazas de Punta Fuego, which is expected to synergize with the group's other enterprises.

Twelve years since its inception, Landco Pacific is now an economic force to be reckoned with in key industrialized areas throughout Luzon. Key projects have kept the company speeding past any opposition rearguard. Landco Pacific's highly diversified portfolio also includes the successful Waterwood Park in Baliuag, Bulacan, the upscale Stonecrest subdivision in San Pedro, Laguna, and what is expected to be Northern Luzon's largest and most exciting development, Lakewood City in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija alongside the shopping and entertainment complex NE Pacific Mall; the Landco Business Park in Legazpi; and Leisure Farms Tagaytay, a new, back-to-basics approach to resort living.

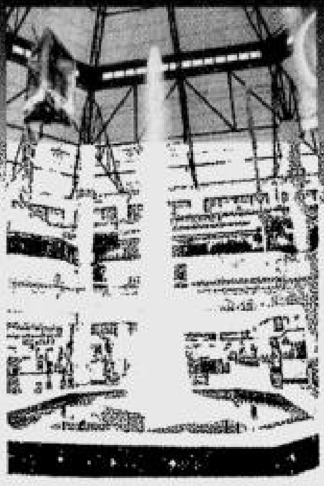
Picking up the pass in Visayas and Mindanao are other enterprises that have channeled a total of P2 Billion into other countryside projects.

The sum total of these projects has given Landco Pacific one of the best attacks in the league that has let it play a very controlled and determined game.

"At the end of the day, it's also all about going the distance and lasting the test of time," emphasizes Burgos.

The Scorecard

Peninsula de Punta Fuego (Nasugbu, Batangas)
The flagship of Landco Pacific projects, Peninsula de Punta Fuego is the country's premiere residential beach resort, with low key, yet luxurious amenities comparable with the best in the world.



NE Pacific Mall (Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija) ▶
Northern Luzon's largest and first fully integrated shopping center.

Stonecrest (San Pedro, Laguna)
Situated in suburban San Pedro, Laguna, the first town South of Alabang, Stonecrest is a perfectly orchestrated residential development that brings the concept and charm of a Southern Californian neighborhood to the Philippines.

Landco-PDCP Corporate Center (Davao City) ▶
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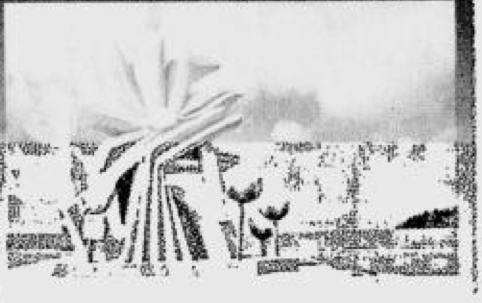


Forest Lake Memorial Parks (Zamboanga, Iloilo, Davao)
Forest Lake celebrates life with verdant sprawling landscapes and unique artwork that complements modern park facilities.

And the winning streak continues...

Las Terrazas de Punta Fuego
(Nasugbu, Batangas)
Landco Pacific hits a homerun with its latest venture in residential resorts, Las Terrazas de Punta Fuego, acknowledged to have the best swimming beach in Batangas.

Leisure Farms Tagaytay
(Lemery, Batangas)
Leisure Farms slam dunks the competition away with its back-to-nature concept as the first agro-tourism development in the Philippines.

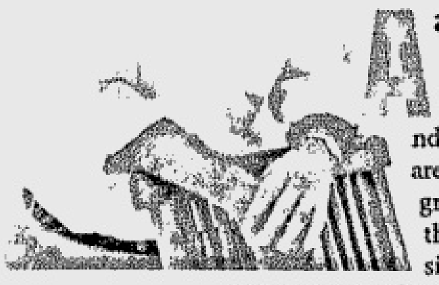
Landco Business Park
(Legazpi City, Albay)
The Pacific Mall at the Landco Business Park scores a touchdown as the new heart of Bicol's commercial district.

Lakewood City
(Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija)
Landco makes a hole-in-one with Lakewood City, the largest residential development and golf course in the central plains.

THE UPPER BOX
LPC Board of Directors (left to right) Victor Limlingan, Arlene Magtibay, Antonio Sypap, Augusto Palisoc Jr., Manuel V. Pangilinan, Chairman; Francis Ceballos, Alfred Xerez-Burgos Jr., President and CEO; Atty. Victoria Tamayao; Jose Ma. Lim; not in picture Edward A. Tortorici

The Heart Of A Winner

Great teams win great games–and a great coach shapes a great team.



A drive for excellence nd mastery of the game are qualities that make a great coach. Yet, when the whistle sounds to signal the start of the game, every coach must turn over his savvy to the skills of his individual players to score that homerun or make that touchdown.

Alfred Xerez-Burgos, Jr. is a strict taskmaster, with the charisma and vision of the best battle-tested sports coach. In 1990, with 20 years experience in the real estate industry, he assembled a crack team of fresh graduates from the country's top universities and has succeeded in molding them into a cohesive, well-oiled machine that has delivered goal after goal for Landco Pacific Corporation.

Upstarts like Francis Ceballos and Arlene Magtibay, who both graduated at the top of their class at the Asian Institute of Management, have helped Burgos in steering a clear course and charting the strategy to carry Landco through boom and bust. Young turks like Patrick Villano, fresh out of Ateneo de Manila upon joining Landco and now, ten years later, a Vice President in charge of the company's flagship project, Peninsula de Punta Fuego.

It is a team that has delivered in good times and bad, with a two-way partnership that has withstood the test of time. With the twists and turns of the country's economic fortunes (and the real estate cycle along with it), Team Landco has emerged leaner, tougher, wiser from lessons learned.

And when the final buzzer sounds, and the crowds leave the stands, Team Landco takes stock and reviews the game's ups and downs. "All games – win or lose – are important learning experiences. Of course," Burgos states "victory is sweeter when it's been hard-fought and you and your team gave it all you've got.

Standing: Joby Xerez-Burgos, project director; Alby Xerez-Burgos, AVP; Chelo Marcelo, project head; Mike Reyes, AVP Kneeling: Maricris Zuluaga, AVP; Ellen Maristela, AVP; Charles Yu, finance director

Standing: Elizabeth Lanuza, sales director; Albert Villa-real, sales director; Marivic Araneta, corporate communications; Jose Ignacio, sales director Kneeling: Ramon Borromeo, HR manager; Myda Sison, project head

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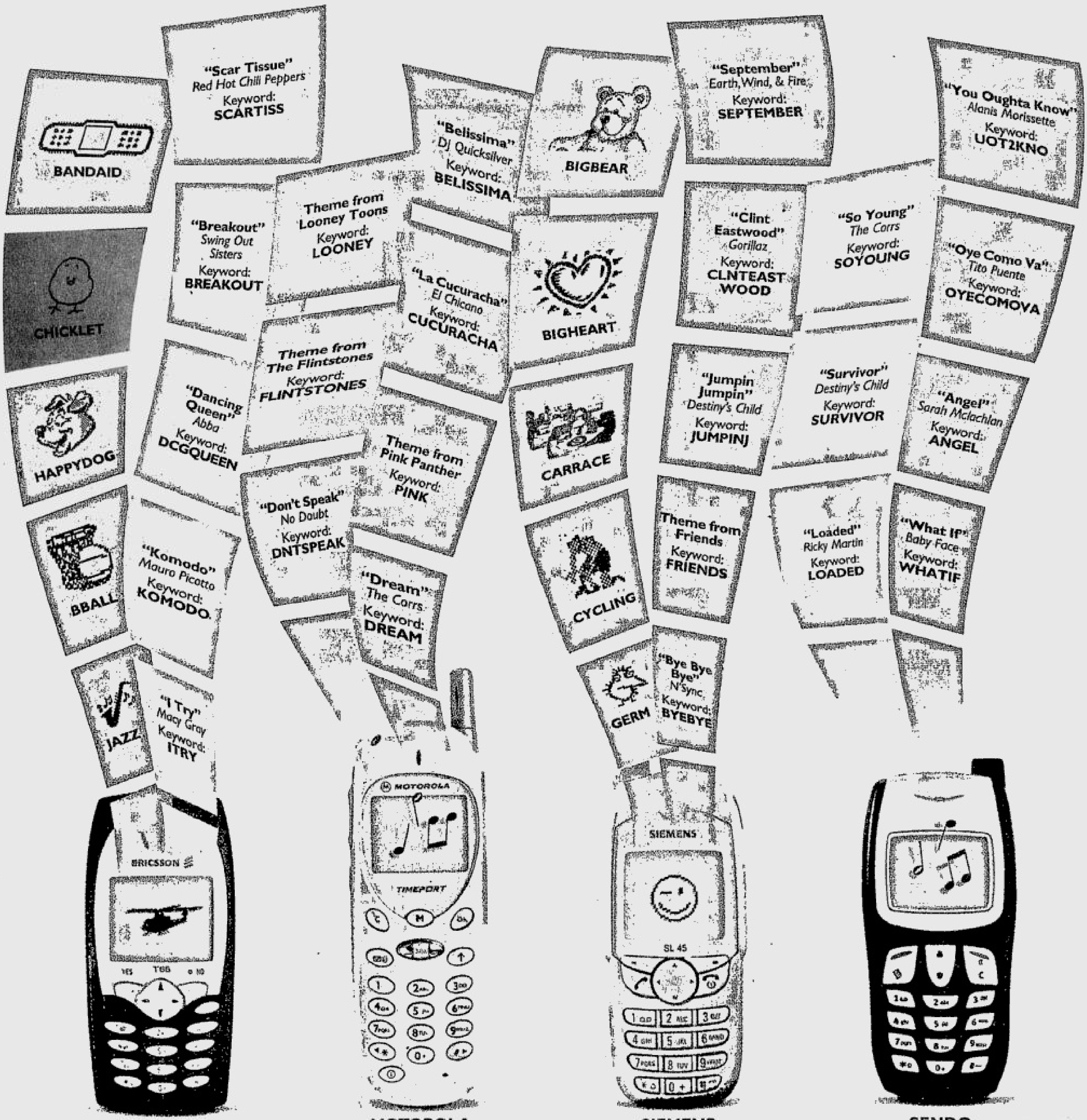
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- To download pictures, key in SPIC <keyword>.
- To download ringtones, key in STONE <keyword>.

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MILF tells gov't: Knock before entering our turf

STORY ON PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
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Kid gets wish of a lifetime

HUDSONVILLE, Michigan—Kate Shermak's teacher gave her and her classmates an unusual assignment: Write to a business company and make an absurd request.

KID/ A4

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Tuesday, March 5, 2002 ★ 44 pages / 3 sections / vol.17 / no. 87 P15

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Sandigan warns Erap of contempt

'We look pitiful,' says court spokesperson

By Volt Contreras and Michael Lim Ubac

A SANDIGANBAYAN spokesperson yesterday warned deposed President Joseph Estrada and his former lawyers they were courting a citation for "indirect contempt" for repeatedly attacking the credibility of the anti-graft court.

Renato Bocar, legal division chief and spokesperson for the special division hearing the Estrada cases, expressed frustration over the behavior of Estrada and his counsel.

"They are getting away with it even if their statements can be cited for contempt of court," he told reporters.

But the special division cannot act on the matter unless state prosecutors led by Ombudsman Aniano Desierto file a manifestation "citing the violations," Bocar added.

Desierto said he would file just such a motion today, seeking to stop Estrada from further issuing statements against the Sandiganbayan. Estrada should desist "from issuing statements which would tend to erode the people's confidence in the judiciary," Desierto said.

The motion will also claim that Estrada had violated the sub judice rule, he added.

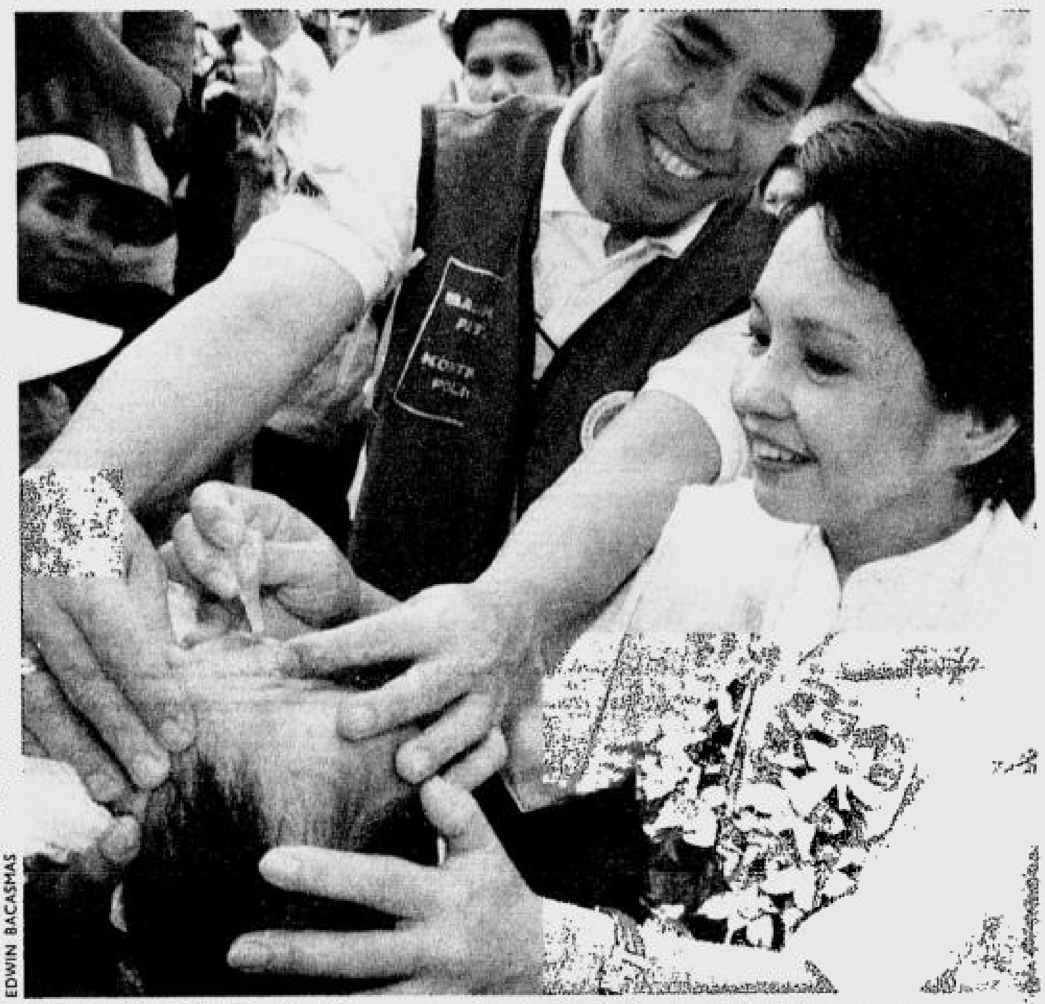
A Sandiganbayan official, who requested anonymity, disclosed that the justices handling the Estrada cases were now in favor of live media coverage of the hearings.

The justices now see such an arrangement as necessary, the official said, so that the public can see for itself how fair the court is in handling the historic cases, which include the first-ever plunder trial of a former president.

Bocar hinted that the special division was eager to respond to Estrada's allegations that the Sandiganbayan was railroading the process.

SANDIGAN/ A16

BLACK FISTS. Supporters of ousted President Joseph Estrada, wearing black ribbons, clench their fists to protest the alleged unfair treatment by the government of their idol. DENNIS SABANGAN



EDWIN BACASMAS

THE OTHER "WAR": President Macapagal, assisted by Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, administers anti-polio vaccine to an infant in Tuguegarao City. The "Balik Patak Kontra Polio" campaign has mobilized 67,000 health workers and volunteers to immunize 12 million kids up to 5 years old nationwide.

Estrada forces mobilize to mark May 1 mayhem

By TJ Burgonio

THE PRO-ESTRADA People's Movement Against Poverty (PMAP) is mobilizing forces but only to commemorate last year's Labor Day attack on Malacañang, a top police official said yesterday.

Director Edgar Aglipay, head of the National Capital Region Police Office, quoted PMAP spokesperson Arnold Obina as saying that the group had been holding a series of meetings to discuss plans to mark the first anniversary of the violent siege.

Aglipay told reporters that he offered to provide police security at the PMAP meetings to ensure that these were conducted peacefully and were not intended "to incite people to sedition."

But Obina turned down the offer and said they were

ESTRADA FORCES/ A16

Erap sees death; Palace says it's all drama

By Volt Contreras and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

JOSEPH Estrada yesterday formally rejected the services of court-appointed private counsel Sigrid Fortun, saying no lawyer could save him now from "inevitable death, a future already written for me by the present administration in connivance with the Supreme Court."

The detained ex-President conveyed the rejection in an emotional letter to Fortun, whose younger brother Raymond was a member of the nine-member defense team Estrada dismissed last week. Raymond, who now serves as a spokesperson for Estrada, said his brother just returned yesterday from a three-day trip abroad.

Both Fortuns were members of Estrada's defense team at his aborted Senate impeachment trial.

The letter was faxed to the Fortun Narvasa & Salazar Law office yesterday. The INQUIRER phoned the law firm around 4 p.m. to seek comment, but was told that Sigfrid Fortun was at a meeting.

Part of Estrada's letter to the court-appointed lawyer read: "They have taken away my office. They have taken away my dignity. And they will take away my life. And I want to spare you from the embarrassment and humiliation of being there in the end. Thus, with due respect, I am rejecting your appointment as my counsel de officio."

But in Malacañang, President

ERAP SEES/ A16

Abu leader arrested in Basilan

By Julie S. Alipala,
PDI Mindanao Bureau
and Martin P. Marfil *in Manila*

ISABELA, Basilan—An Abu Sayyaf leader with a P1-million bounty on his head was nabbed Friday by intelligence operatives in Lamitan, Basilan, an arrest which led to the capture the following day of another Abu Sayyaf bandit.

Sonny Teng, 19, a confessed aide to Abu Sayyaf chieftain Abu Sabaya, was caught at around 1 a.m. in Barangay Matibay in Lamitan.

"He was apparently doing surveillance on former hostages," Col. Alexander Aleo of the 103rd Brigade said. In another report, Aleo was quoted as saying that Teng had been conducting "surveillance operations" on possible US and Filipino military targets in Lamitan.

"He is currently being investigated and interrogated," Aleo said, adding that the arrest came after a tip-off from

ABU/ A4

JUNGLE BATH REUTERS

US soldiers, with fingers on the trigger, trudge up a hill after taking a bath in a stream inside their jungle base camp in Upper Mahayahay, Maluso, Basilan.

Allies seek Gloria OK to US exile

By Juliet L. Javellana and Rocky Nazareno

ALLIES of ousted President Joseph Estrada in the House of Representatives are set to file a resolution calling on President Macapagal-Arroyo to send him into exile.

The new tack taken by Estrada's supporters came as a growing number of legislators in the House and Senate began withdrawing their signatures from the resolution urging the Sandiganbayan to grant Estrada's request to travel to the United States for knee surgery.

"We'll call upon the President (through the resolution) because it's a political decision and it must come from the President," Lanao del Sur Rep. Benasing Macarambon of the Nation-

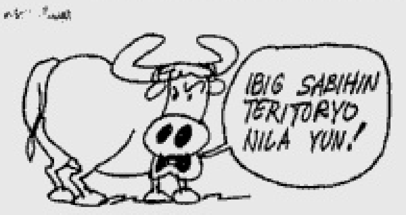
ALLIES/ A16

Erap's attacks on judiciary unfair— Salonga

FORMER Senate President Jovito Salonga called deposed President Joseph Estrada's "repeated assaults" on the Supreme Court and the Sandiganbayan "baseless and unfair." "It is our duty to expose the false imputations of the former President, aimed at wrecking, for his own personal benefit, our system of justice," the head of Kilosbayan and founder of Bantay Katarungan said in a statement.

ERAP'S ATTACKS/ A16

Second FRONT PAGE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WARNING TO RP-US TROOPS

MILF: Knock before entering our turf

THE REBEL Moro Islamic Liberation Front has asked the government to coordinate the movements of United States and Philippine troops participating in the Balikatan joint exercises in Mindanao to avoid accidental clashes, Jesus Dureza, the presidential assistant for Mindanao, said yesterday.

The guerrillas made the proposal during a recent meeting with government representatives in ongoing peace talks, said Dureza who heads the government negotiating panel.

The government will respond later this week, Dureza said.

MILF guerrillas and government troops have figured in several clashes in Central Mindanao in recent weeks, in what military officials have said was a fresh offensive by the rebels.

Secretary Eduardo Ermita, the presidential adviser on the peace process, said the MILF rebels may be attempting to reclaim their camps, which fell during an all-out military campaign by the Estrada administration in 2000.

"Based on reports we have received, they are moving toward areas where they're not supposed to go like their former camps," Ermita said in an interview over dzRH.

The MILF, which has been fighting for an independent Islamic state in Mindanao, claims to have about 2,000 members in Basilan where 160 US Special Forces and Philippine troops are engaged in a counter-terrorism exercise designed to destroy the Abu Sayyaf, a smaller but more violent Muslim extremist group.

"We'll allow them to enter our areas as long as they coordinate their movement with our commanders," MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said.

"That's the only way we can possibly avoid mis-encounters that could trigger a larger armed conflict," Kabalu said.

Such coordination was practiced by government troops in past years to avoid accidental clashes during ceasefire periods, Kabalu said.

Dureza said granting that request could imply recognition of MILF claims to certain territories, a touchy issue that disrupted past peace negotiations. He declined to say how the government would respond to the proposal.

Kabalu said MILF forces are scattered in the towns of Tuburan, Maluso and Tipo Tipo, comprising the largest rebel force now in Basilan.

The MILF force is much larger than the less than 100 Abu Sayyaf terrorists holding a US missionary couple and a Filipino nurse hostage.

About 5,000 Filipino troops have been carrying out a massive offensive in the last nine months to destroy the Abu Sayyaf, which has been linked to the al-Qaida terrorist network of Osama bin Laden, and rescue the hostages.

The troops have received training and weapons from the US.

Aside from the MILF and the Abu Sayyaf, remnants of the Moro National Liberation Front, another rebel group that waged a bloody separatist uprising in Mindanao in the past before concluding a peace agreement, can be found in some areas of Basilan.

The MILF does not consider the US troops as enemies, Kabalu said, but the rebels were ready to defend their stronghold from any encroachment.

US soldiers are not allowed to engage in combat in Basilan but they could enter war zones to observe Filipino troops battling the Abu Sayyaf. They could only fire in self-defense.

US military officials have said their troops were taking precautions but added they are prepared to take casualties in the name of countering terrorism in the south.

Ermita said that based on a previous agreement between the MILF and the government, only families of MILF rebels are allowed to return to the former MILF camps now under government control.

"No armed groups are supposed to go there," Ermita said.

The two sides agreed on a ceasefire while their representatives are negotiating for peace.

"They might be trying to exploit the ceasefire so they can move freely and return to areas where they were driven out a few years ago," said Ermita.

Forty MILF camps, including their main headquarters of Camp Abubakar, fell in July 2000.

The MILF, however, managed to preserve its armed force estimated at about 12,500 men. ***AP and Carlito Pablo***

US choppers to stalk Abu Sayyaf at night

ZAMBOANGA CITY—US troops training Philippine soldiers in counter-terrorism in the country will increase night flying exercises in coming days using Chinook and Pave Hawk helicopters, a US military spokesperson said yesterday.

Maj. Cynthia Teramae said an MH-47E Chinook helicopter has arrived in the Philippines to replace one that crashed Feb. 22 in deep waters off Negros Island, killing all 10 people aboard.

The three Chinooks now in the country, all belonging to a special operations company based in Taegu, South Korea, will move to an air force base in Zamboanga from their previous temporary base on Mactan island in the central Philippines.

The joint Philippines-US Balikatan ("shoulder to shoulder") exercise, with 660 US troops, including 160 from the Special Forces, is aimed at wiping out the Muslim extremist Abu Sayyaf group.

The Special Forces soldiers, armed only for self-defense, have been deployed to Basilan island to observe Filipino troops fighting Abu Sayyaf guerrillas who hold an American couple and a Filipino nurse hostage.

The three Chinooks, mainly to transport cargo and troops, would add to three Pave Hawk helicopters, another version of the popular Army Blackhawks, already in Zamboanga.

The redeployment of the Chinooks followed construction of three helicopter pads at Zamboanga's Edwin Andrews Air Base, Teramae said.

About 60 US soldiers in Cebu would redeploy to this southern port city with the helicopters, she said.

The US Army Chinook helicopter that crashed was one of two returning to Mactan after delivering equipment and US Special Forces troops to Basilan.

Teramae said the helicopters will provide "night air ambulance" service between Zamboanga and Basilan.

"There has been several training exercises and they are going to continue this week in practicing the air medevac operations," she said. "They have to get the timing down and they have to do it over and over again to ensure that they know the route."

Lt. Col. Danilo Servando, spokesperson for the Philippine military's Southern Command, said the "force build up phase and the integration phase" of the training exercise are finished and the two sides are now planning actual training.

He said the US military will provide "command and control" training to improve the Philippine military's southern headquarters and the battalions operating against the Abu Sayyaf on Basilan. ***AP***

Pentagon could turn into another Abu, cops warn

POLICE officials yesterday voiced fears that the notorious Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang could turn into another Abu Sayyaf if this group is not immediately neutralized.

Deputy Director General Edgar Galvante, head of the newly formed anti-kidnap Task Force Mindanao, said it was possible the Pentagon gang could become a "major threat," like the Abu Sayyaf, citing its sufficient manpower and firearms.

"Our immediate concern is to neutralize this group. These reports of kidnapping are taking their toll on the country's economy and prestige," he told reporters at the police headquarters in Camp Crame.

Like the Abu Sayyaf bandits, the Pentagon gang, composed mostly of former members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, gained notoriety for abducting mostly foreigners in Mindanao.

The group is believed to have snatched South Korean Yoon Jae-kun and Filipino hotel owner Carlos Belonio in Sarangani province last month.

Strict screening

Galvante said the recruitment of policemen for Task Force Mindanao was now ongoing, adding that applicants were being subjected to strict screening following reports that some policemen were involved in kidnapping.

"We have given specific instructions that all police officers and personnel who will be included in the task force shall be scrutinized strictly, and see to it that there's no derogatory information that will somehow jeopardize their mission," he said.

Weeks ago, Chief Supt. William Dangane, operations chief of the Task Force Sanglahi-Pentagon, was subjected to summary dismissal proceedings after police found sufficient evidence that he had links with the gang. He had denied this.

Task Force Sanglahi-Pentagon, created in the late '90s to crack down on the Pentagon, had been deactivated following the creation of Task Force Mindanao, Galvante said.

Besieged Code-NGO leaders go on leave

TWO leaders of the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (Code-NGO) have taken an indefinite leave of absence from the organization and the Peace Foundation to concentrate on defending the PEACe Bonds.

Marissa Camacho-Reyes and Danilo Songco, Code-NGO chairperson and national coordinator, respectively, explained in a letter that their work in both organizations had been greatly affected by their preoccupation with the PEACe Bonds controversy.

"We do this so (the Code-NGO and the Peace Foundation) can resume normal operations while we continue to explain the issues to all that care to listen," the letter said.

"This decision will also hopefully allay the fears of some quarters that we may influence the use of the funds generated for purposes other than poverty alleviation," it added.

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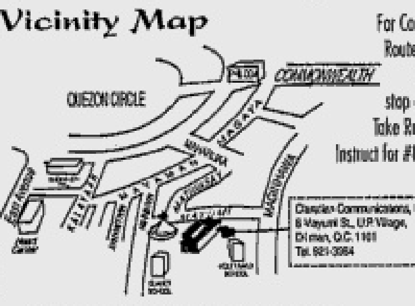

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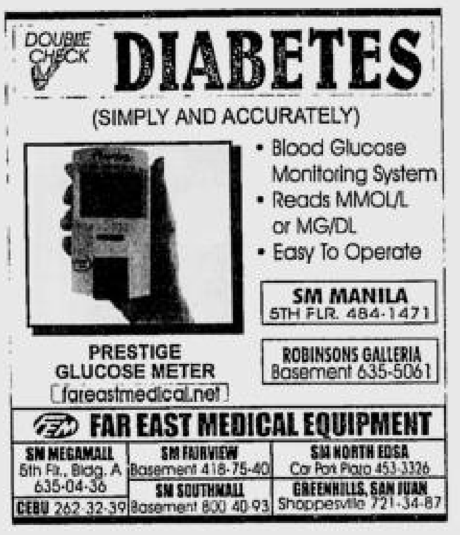
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PCGG: Fight's not over for Imelda's Leyte home

By Donna S. Cueto

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government is not giving up its claim over the multimillion-peso Olot property of Imelda Romualdez Marcos without a fight.

PCGG commissioner Ruben Carranza said the agency would appeal the Sandiganbayan decision, which it considered "wrong."

In a Feb. 28 ruling, the anti-graft court junked the PCGG's 16-year-old sequestration order on the Olot property, which the Romualdez clan claim as their "ancestral home."

The court ordered the PCGG to restore the beachfront property located in Olot, Tolosa, Leyte, to Marcos in 30 days.

"We will seek a reconsideration. That (order) is not yet final," Carranza said.

He said that the court would still have to determine if the property should be forfeited in favor of the government after the litigation.

Carranza argued that the PCGG rules and regulations issued in April 1986, should not be made to apply to the PCGG's actions, including the writs of sequestration issued before that date.

PCGG rules and regulations issued on April 11, 1986 require that at least two commissioners must sign and issue a sequestration order after a property has been determined as prima facie ill-gotten.

The Sandiganbayan said that the sequestration order for the Olot property dated March 18, 1986 was "invalid or void" as it had been issued not by a commissioner but by two Leyte-based PCGG lawyers.

Since the order was void, "the government never acquired any right whatsoever over the Olot property," the court said.

Solon wants Comelec chief replaced

By Juliet L. Javellana

AN ADMINISTRATION congressman yesterday said Commission on Elections Chair Alfredo Benipayo is incompetent to head the commission and should be replaced.

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. said he would file a formal opposition to Benipayo's confirmation before the Commission on Elections.

He is also seeking the replacement of Comelec Commissioner Resurreccion Borra.

"How can we render clean and honest elections when the chair is not competent to lead the commission as a cohesive and collegial body?" said Pichay, member of the ruling Lakas.

Pichay said Benipayo's incompetence was demonstrated by the internecine intramurals among old and new commissioners.

Pichay noted that for the first time in Comelec's history, commissioners themselves formally opposed the confirmation of the Comelec chair before the bicameral CA.

"We have to protect the integrity of the Comelec, which has already been heavily damaged by all these intramurals between the two groups. As it now stands, the public has already lost its faith in the present Comelec's ability to ensure clean and honest elections," Pichay said.

Pichay said Benipayo has failed to observe the tradition of the Comelec as a collegial body. This, he said, resulted in the polarization of the commission into two hostile camps.

Pichay said that in opposing Benipayo, he is not siding with the group of Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco who had led the opposition to Benipayo.

But Pichay said it was "largely Benipayo's fault" that the Comelec board has become so fractious.

"The chairman has failed to consolidate the Comelec into a cohesive collegial body. If they had been objective in their decisions, anchored on legal and constitutional grounds, then I am sure they would not have been so vehemently contested by all four incumbent commissioners," Pichay said.

Pichay said the Comelec chair should be able to lead the Comelec regardless of party affiliations.

No showdown for Ping, nemesis

AVERTING a showdown, opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday avoided a Senate hearing that had been called to investigate his allegations that police officers, including his nemesis, Police Director Reynaldo Berroya, have been receiving illegal gambling payoffs.

The investigation, which is being conducted by the committee on public order and illegal drugs chaired by Sen. Robert Barbers, was triggered by Lacson's privilege speech last November.

All the police generals that Lacson had accused in that speech were at the hearing. They all denied Lacson's allegations.

Berroya, chief of the PNP Regional Office 3, accused Lacson of concocting stories.

Director Lucas Managuelod, head of the directorate for investigation and detective management who represented PNP Chief Leandro Mendoza, also denied the allegations.

The director of the National Bureau of Investigation, Reynaldo Wycoco, denied that he was a protector of "jueteng" operators.

He said the NBI was not even involved in anti-illegal gambling operations.

Lacson should produce evidence to back up his accusations so "we will also do what is legally necessary to refute the charges against us," Wycoco said. ***Cynthia D. Balana and Philip C. Tubeza***

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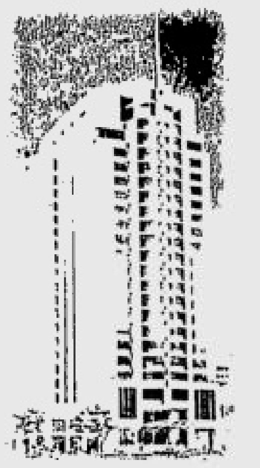
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Kid gets wish of a lifetime

From page A1

"My outrageous request is to get a lifetime supply of curly fries for free. They are my favorite fries," Kate wrote to the operators of the local Arby's restaurant.

"If you can't meet my outrageous request, I will understand."

The restaurant decided to one-up Kate in the outlandish department by actually granting her wish.

The fifth-grader got a certificate good for free curly fries for the rest of her life at the Hudsonville franchise, The Grand Rapids Press reported last week.

Lisa Young, who manages Arby's in Hudsonville, about 16 km southwest of Grand Rapids, said she and company officials "thought it was great that Kate decided that Arby's was her favorite place to eat."

John Pyper, Kate's teacher at Jamestown Elementary School, said he had assigned the lesson for years as a way to make letter-writing fun.

This year, one child received a month's supply of free chocolate milk from a local dairy.

Another student got a free ice cream party at a restaurant in nearby Jamestown.

But some requests were just too unrealistic.

Pyper said one student wrote to a sixth-grade teacher, asking that she be excused from homework next year. **AP**

Loi: Medical treatment, yes; exile, no

By Rocky Nazareno

IF SHE would have her way, Sen. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito would rather that her husband, former President Joseph Estrada, not go into exile.

"Its not right to send him into exile. What we asked for was only for medical treatment. If you send him into exile, it's like you are driving him away even if he has not done anything wrong," Ejercito said.

In fact, Ejercito said the former President, himself, did not want to go into exile.

"I am also ruling out any possibility that (Estrada) will overstay because there is an extradition treaty (between the Philippines and United States)," she said.

"Should he overstay in the US, they could always extradite him," she said.

Ejercito said the idea of sending her husband into exile could have come from the administration because Estrada had long been a "pain in the ass" for President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The legitimacy of the administration remains under threat with the continued presence in the country of the former President who still enjoys popular support.

Ejercito said she had no control over Estrada's supporters.

"I cannot stop them (should they do anything to threaten the Macapagal-Arroyo administration)," she said.

Erap's attacks on judiciary unfair—Salonga

From page A1

Salonga said the Supreme Court could not have dropped the plunder charge against his co-accused son, former San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, nor allowed him to post bail, "for the simple reason that his son has been charged as a co-conspirator in the plunder charges against Erap. And his son cannot be given bail by the Supreme Court without first going through the proper procedure, which all persons accused of a capital offense must follow."

Estrada had referred to the high court's denial of Jinggoy's bail petition as "the last straw." "Erap claims that it was the rejection of his son's plea for bail that led him to dismiss his lawyers and state that he has lost his trust in the present system of justice," Salonga said. But the "actual reason is something Erap wants our people to forget—his damaging admission (that he had signed as Jose Velarde) which surprised his own lawyers."

Salonga also said the three justices who compose the special division of the anti-graft court are "the best available choice." Salonga said, "the other justices of the Sandiganbayan are about to retire or are disqualified, for one reason or another." And the three who are the only ones available "are actually among the best in the Sandiganbayan—in terms of competence, moral integrity, independence of mind, dedication and industry."

Salonga, who had a close working relationship with Estrada when they were still senators, said it was actually the Sandiganbayan justices themselves, contrary to the allegations of Estrada's camp, who requested the creation of a special division.

"The special division was (then) created by order of the Supreme Court en banc, on the recommendation of the Oversight Committee, chaired by Senior Justice Josue Bellosillo. All the other members of the Committee are Erap appointees: Justices (Bernardo) Pardo, (Consuelo) Ynares-Santiago, (Arturo) Buena, and (Angelina) Gutierrez-Sandoval," Salonga said. ***J. Nery***

Abu leader arrested in Basilan

From page A1)

villagers. Teng is said to be responsible for the beheading of several Abu Sayyaf captives and the death of at least 10 residents of Barangay Balobo, Lamitan, last Aug. 8.

His capture led to the arrest of Jaid Awalal, who participated in the May 20, 2000 abduction of teachers from Sinangkapan town and of Claretian missionary Fr. Rhoel Gallardo. The priest was later killed.

Aleo said Awalal, arrested on March 1, was also one of those who abducted the Lamitan coconut farmers on Nov. 15 last year. He added that during tactical interrogation, Awalal admitted also taking part in the Lamitan siege last June 2.

The two belong to the faction holding American missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham hostage.

During initial interrogation by members of the 18th Infantry Battalion, Teng admitted that he is a close-in security aide of Sabaya and that he had participated in the infamous June 2 Lamitan incident, where Abu Sayyaf members slipped through a military dragnet.

In addition, military sources said that Teng was identified as one of the participants in the Balobo, Lamitan kidnapping, where several farm workers were abducted on Aug. 2, 2001.

Teng is reported to be under the control of Suhod Tanajalin and Sattar Yacub, two Abu Sayyaf leaders, who recently sent surrender feelers.

Yesterday, Teng was brought to the Basilan provincial jail; Awalal's records are still being reviewed.

Military encounter

On Sunday, soldiers clashed with Abu Sayyaf bandits in Tuburan, Basilan, where US Special Forces are deployed with an army contingent.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, commander of the 18th Infantry Battalion, said one of his men was wounded in the encounter in Barangay Bohe Tambis.

The military recovered an M-16 rifle and a Garand rifle after the skirmish, a result of the military's continuing pursuit operations against the notorious bandit group.

"During the pursuit operations, we were shocked to find out that the Abu Sayyaf fled towards an MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front) camp in Parang, Tuburan," Lucero told the INQUIRER.

Capt. Noel Detoyato, Southern Command spokesperson, said no US forces were involved in the 15-minute gunbattle.

"There were no US Special Forces present in the encounter since they are still in the battalion headquarters acquainting themselves with soldiers and local officials in the area," Detoyato said.

Some 160 US Green Berets are deployed in Basilan to train the military in fighting the Abu Sayyaf. Both the Philippine and US governments have linked the Abu Sayyaf to the al-Qaida terror network of Osama bin Laden, the alleged mastermind of the Sept. 11 deadly attacks in the United States.

Earlier, Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu said the increasing activity of the Abu Sayyaf in various parts of Basilan was meant to split the military's attention.

Cimatu said the bandit group was being hounded by a series of debacles, including the surrender and arrest of some of its important members.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, March 5, 2002
3rd Week of Lent

1st Reading:	**Dan 3:25, 34-43**
Gospel:	**Mt 18:21-35**

Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, how many times must I forgive the offenses of my brother or sister? Seven times?" Jesus answered, "No, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

This story throws light on the kingdom of heaven. A king decided to settle the accounts of his servants. Among the first was one who owed him ten thousand gold ingots. As the man could not repay the debt, the king commanded that he be sold as a slave with his wife, children and all his goods in payment.

The official threw himself at the feet of the king and said, 'Give me time, and I will pay you back everything.' The king took pity on him and not only set him free but even canceled his debt.

This official then left the king's presence and he met one of his companions who owed him a hundred pieces of silver. He grabbed him by the neck and almost strangled him, shouting, 'Pay me what you owe!' His companion threw himself at his feet and asked him, 'Give me time, and I will pay everything.' The other did not agree, but sent him to prison until he had paid all his debt.

His companions saw what happened. They were indignant and so they went and reported everything to their lord. Then the lord summoned his official and said, 'Wicked servant, I forgave you all that you owed when you begged me to do so. Weren't you bound to have pity on your companion as I had pity on you?' The lord was now angry, so he handed his servant over to be punished, until he had paid his whole debt."

Jesus added, "So will my heavenly Father do with you unless each of you sincerely forgive your brother or sister."

Commentary

A disturbing story showing human power to tie the hands of God; the reverse side of the parable of the prodigal son. The king, so ready to forgive, finds forgiveness not understood: the servant felt, "I got off," rather than, "I was forgiven." Like any gift, forgiveness can only be offered, but not given unless it is received. God's only alternative is to respect our freedom. So, the prodigal son sits it out with the pigs and his empty stomach, and the servant finds himself in jail after all. God is love, and there is no difference between God's love and God's justice. But we have the power to make God wait a long time. And God keeps on waiting.... watching and hoping for that moment when we just might possibly see, hear, return and be healed.

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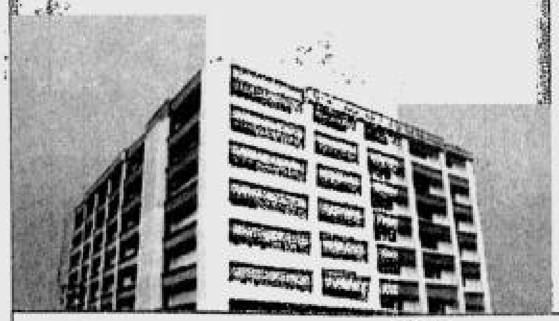

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Digest by R.B. Vera

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Gloria not giving up on 2 Alvarezes

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has not given up on the two Alvarezes in her Cabinet, her spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao yesterday said.

Tiglao said that contrary to reports, President Macapagal is not scouting for a replacement of Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, who is facing stiff opposition for his confirmation before the bicameral Commission on Appointments.

"She's still hoping that the CA will finally confirm Secretary Alvarez," Tiglao said.

"The same goes for Bebot Alvarez," Tiglao said, referring to Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez, who is also facing rough sailing before the commission.

Reports emanating from the Senate claimed that Ms Macapagal has started sounding out members of Congress whether former Marikina Mayor Bayani Fernando is an acceptable appointee to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"She has completely denied sounding out Congress or any other people about the replacement of Secretary Alvarez," Tiglao said.

The other Alvarez, however, is claiming to have the support of no less than Jaime Cardinal Sin in his bid for confirmation.

A press statement from the Department of Transportation and Communications said expressions of support from a wide cross-section of society for the confirmation of Pantaleon Alvarez continued to pour in.

Thirty transport cooperatives from all over the country have banded together to rally behind the confirmation of the former Davao del Norte solon, the DOTC said.

It said Federation of Rizal Transport Service Development Cooperative chair Robert Noriega had high praises for Alvarez's "Oks na Oks" program which had changed the DOTC's land transport sector into a better functioning agency, "reducing bureaucratic red tape and processes are expedited."

Federation of Aviation Organizations President Ernesto del Rosario hailed Alvarez for providing "a viable and dynamic business environment which would enable its membership to effectively promote, enhance and bring the much needed economic growth and prosperity" to the country.

Cardinal Sin was also quoted as having told Alvarez to hang on. "I shall pray that you may receive your confirmation from the Commission on Appointments as soon as possible so that you can go full speed in your work for the country."

Meanwhile, labor leaders came out openly in support of Secretary Alvarez's confirmation. Timoteo Aranjuez, chair of the Congress of Labor Organizations (CLO) pledged the full support of the 28 federations under its umbrella for the confirmation of Secretary Alvarez.

Women at losing end of job market

By Blanche S. Rivera

MORE women than men sought employment last year, but most ended up either permanently displaced or stuck in non-paying jobs, according to a study by the Center for Women's Resources.

The CWR study showed that as of October 2001, 57 percent of new entrants to the labor force, or 1.435 million, were women.

But 79 percent of the new female work force ended up in the informal sector.

"Women enter the labor force looking for regular income sources only to be slapped down with job scarcity," the CWR report said.

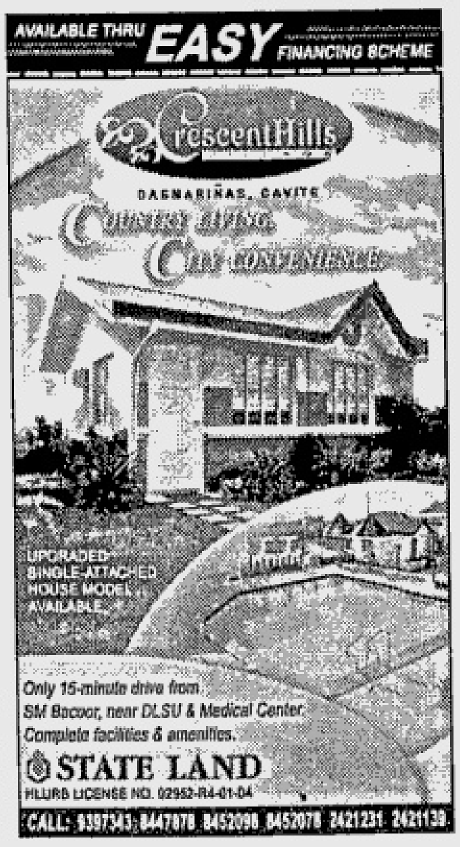
"Like the men, many women are losing their jobs."

Almost half of those employed lost their jobs from January to November last year, adding 27,045 to the ranks of permanently displaced workers.

The same number could have gone into job rotation in the same period, the report said.

Various studies have noted the emerging feminization of the work force, particularly among overseas Filipino workers.

An Ibon Foundation study showed that 70 percent of the 8 to 11 million OFWs are women who are usually employed as domestic helpers, hotel workers and entertainers.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Frats on the warpath

EDITORIAL

WHAT a waste. What a waste of human life and human potential. It was a crime that made victims of both the victim and the perpetrators. We are referring to the slaying of Dennis Venturina, a graduating public administration student and member of the Sigma Rho Fraternity of the University of the Philippines. Venturina died from severe head injuries after he was beaten with baseball bats and lead pipes by members of a rival fraternity, Scintilla Juris, on Dec. 8, 1994.

The court handed down the decision on the Venturina case last week. Among those convicted of Venturina's slaying was Warren Zingapan, 29, who topped the board exams for civil engineers with a grade of 95.1 in 1996. Also convicted were four *"iskolar ng bayan"* (government scholars) in the UP whose ages ranged from 19 to 24 at the time the killing occurred.

Judge Jose Mendoza of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court, who handed down the decision, said: "In the torturous road of determining a just verdict, the court agonized at the thought of sending these bright and promising *'iskolar ng bayan'* behind bars for the most fruitful years of their lives. Doubtless, they would have been assets to their families and to society."

Venturina's death was only one of many that have resulted from fraternity rumbles in the University of the Philippines since the 1960s. A 1995 study showed that Scintilla Juris and Sigma Rho topped the list of organizations with the most reported involvement in rumbles and other forms of violence at UP Diliman from 1991 to 1994. Of the 82 instances of fraternity violence over the four-year period, 20 involved Scintilla Juris and 18, Sigma Rho.

It is ironic that so many fraternity rumbles should occur at the University of the Philippines, the country's premier institution of learning. Young people are supposed to imbibe culture and learning at a university, but in frat rumbles they descend to the level of bloodthirsty beasts engaged in a battle for survival.

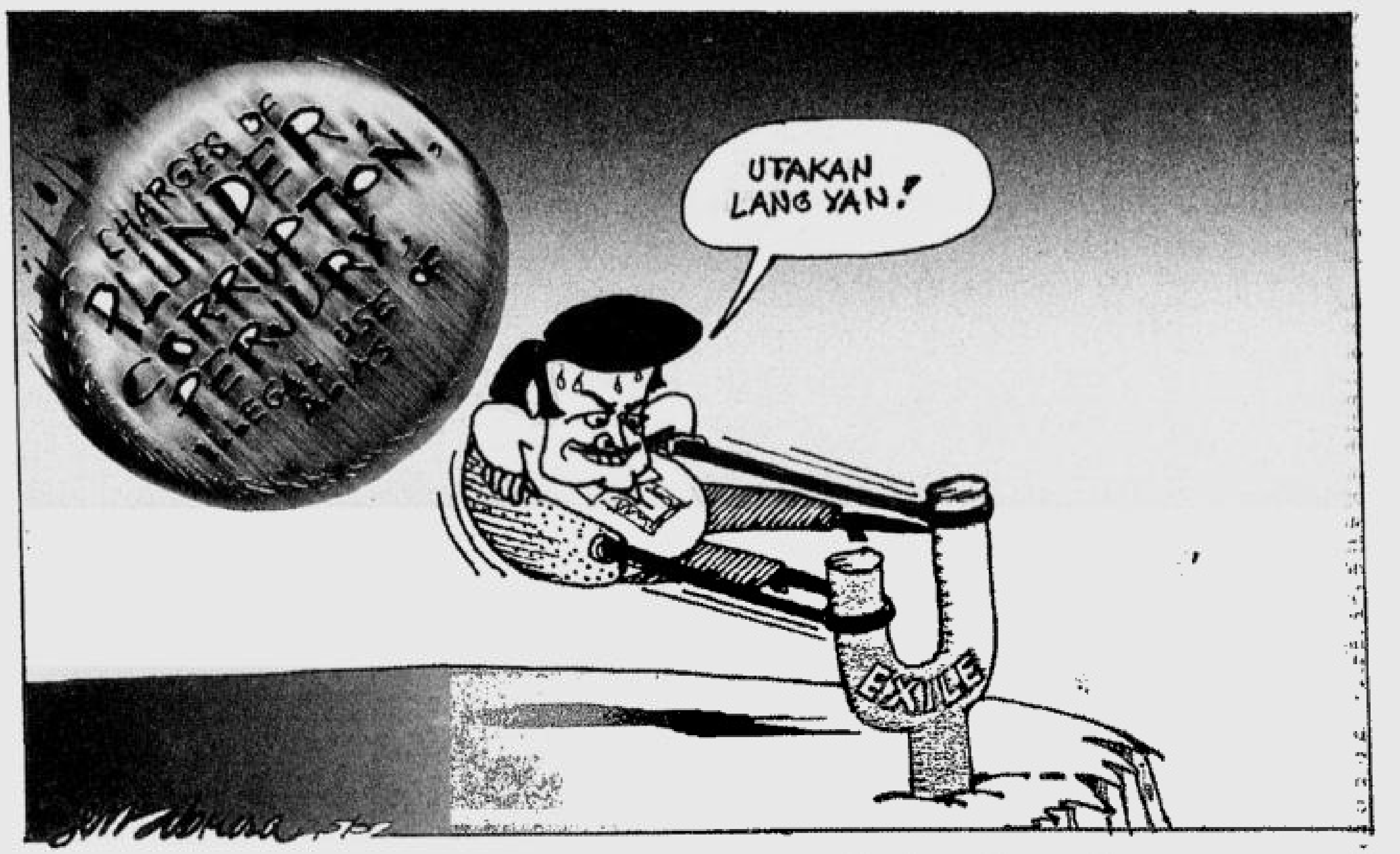
And it is also ironic that fraternities based in the College of Law like Sigma Rho, Scintilla Juris and Alpha Phi Beta are among the top five on the list of "violent" fraternities at the state university. The College of Law is supposed to teach its students to resort to peaceful means such as debate, negotiation and trial to resolve differences between people, but apparently its teachings are falling on deaf ears. A culture of violence is growing in a college where law, order and civility are supposed to reign.

Why are fraternity conflicts becoming very violent, and in some cases, even fatal? In 1995, then Sen. Jose Lina Jr., chair of the Senate committee on youth and sports development, said hearings on the root causes and sociological and psychological bases of fraternity rumbles showed that the violence inflicted on neophytes during fraternity hazing is one of the basic reasons why fraternity members appear to entertain no second thoughts about inflicting pain on others.

Lina quoted UP Prof. Edru Abraham as saying: "There is hatred injected into the minds of these fraternity members as a result of hazing that they experienced so they project this hatred by declaring war against members of other fraternities as an expression of loyalty to their fraternity."

Again, it is ironic that fraternities, which are supposed to promote a spirit of brotherhood, camaraderie and friendship, are the very ones that are practicing the culture of violence on the campus. If it is competition they want, they can always engage in friendly, constructive competition in such events as debating, elocution and writing contests. Or they can channel their excess energy to projects such as cleanliness and beautification campaigns that would benefit their university and community. There are many non-violent undertakings that they can engage in if only these state scholars would use their heads and hearts well.

The administration and the security departments of universities and colleges like the University of the Philippines will have to keep a tight rein and close watch on fraternities to prevent them from engaging in rumbles. It would probably deter fraternity violence if universities and colleges would agree to expel frat members who are involved in rumbles and refuse enrolment to those who have been expelled by other universities and colleges. This senseless waste of human lives and human potential has got to stop.



Two Jancoms? In case of doubt, don't

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

(Continued from yesterday)

ONE more reason why the Jancom garbage contract should not be consummated and instead investigated (by Congress, the Executive and the Supreme Court) is the mystery behind the identity of the private corporation with which the government will enter into a P390-billion contract. There are two Jancoms that are fighting over the contract and nobody, not even the Supreme Court, knows with certainty which is the genuine one.

There is Jancom International Development Projects Pty. Ltd. of Australia. It was declared the sole complying bidder in spite of a failed bidding because of the absence of a bid bond. Its office address is P.O. Box 91, Double Day, New South Wales 2028. Its Philippine address is ACC Law Bldg., 451-461 Cabildo St., Intramuros, Manila. Its listed chair and president is one Jay Alparalan, with mailing address at 42 Diamond Bay Road, Vancluse, New South Wales, 2030, Australia.

Then there is Jancom Environmental Corp. (JEC), registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission on Sept. 27, 1996. It was organized purely by Filipinos specifically for the waste project. It was authorized by Jancom International to sign the illegal contract not approved by the National Economic Development Authority (Neda). Its office address is 804 Centerpoint Bldg., Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

In July 1995, Jancom International prequalified for the government's waste disposal project. Because it did not submit a bid bond, the pre-qualification, bidding and awards committee (PBAC) declared the bidding a failure.

In spite of the failed bidding, however, Jancom International was notified the next year that it was the sole complying bidder. Jancom International made it appear that JEC was its subsidiary and authorized it to sign the garbage build-operate-transfer (BOT) project with the Philippine government.

The contract was signed on Dec. 19, 1997. JEC was represented by Alparalan, chair, and Jorge Mora, chief executive officer. Although the bid was awarded to Jancom International, it authorized JEC "to undertake...the BOT implementation of the Solid Waste Management Project." JEC's address has now been changed to 11th Flr., Pacific Star Bldg., Makati Ave. cor. Gil J. Puyat Ave., Makati.

On Feb. 19, 1998, Jancom International agreed to sell 80 percent of JEC's P500-million capital to Comagie Generale D'Enterprises Automobiles (CGEA), a subsidiary of Vivendi, Jancom International's French partner.

On April 7, 1998, JEC and CGEA signed an agreement increasing JEC's capitalization to 25 percent of the project cost, estimated at $377 million. The agreement also stipulated that immediately after the capital increase, CGEA's equity in JEC will be reduced from 80 percent to only 10 percent.

On Jan. 4, 2000, Jancom International appointed Manuel L. Molina as legal counsel. But on Sept. 4, 2000, Molina was fired as legal counsel. Nevertheless, Molina continued to represent JEC in all its court cases.

In two letters (dated Feb. 5, 2001 and July 27, 2001) addressed to Secretary Renato Gorona, Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo and MMDA Chair Benjamin Abalos, Jancom International disowned JEC and warned the government not to negotiate with unauthorized representatives.

But on Aug. 3, 2001, JEC wrote the SEC insisting that it is the local implementing company of the BOT contract awarded to Jancom International.

For its part, Jancom International warned Romulo, Abalos and Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez against "illegal interest groups" who wanted "to secure the collaboration of government to benefit illegally from the Jancom BOT contract."

Alparalan of Jancom International maintained that he was the owner of JEC on the basis of a deed of assignment dated March 24, 1997. JEC then asked Alparalan to pay P200 million for the shares he claimed he owned. Alparalan failed to pay, and JEC declared that Alparalan was not a shareholder of JEC.

For his part, Molina said Alparalan should not be allowed to stop the implementation of the BOT contract.

According to the General Information Sheet (GIS) filed with the SEC on April 1, 2000, the majority owners of JEC were Ma. Linda Martinel and Jancom International. But according to the GIS for 2002, the majority owners of JEC are Augusto G. Gan, Melchor C. Orosa, Sheila P. Guevara, Bernadette G. Parás and Ma. Victoria G. Gan.

Up to the present, Jancom International and JEC are embroiled in a battle for ownership of the latter.

Questions:

To whom should the government award the contract? Jancom International is the winning bidder but JEC is claiming the contract as the alleged local representative of Jancom International. However, the latter has already disowned JEC. Moreover, two or more groups are now fighting over the ownership of JEC. How can the government enter into a contract when it is not certain who are the real owners of JEC? Should the contract be awarded to Jancom International, the winning bidder, or JEC which claims to be its local subsidiary but which has already been disowned by the winning bidder?

Won't the government be embroiled in a lawsuit should it give the contract to one or the other? Isn't this enough reason to invalidate any contract? Didn't the Supreme Court's Third Division see these problems? Granting that it did not, now that these problems have been pointed out, shouldn't the Supreme Court en banc reverse the decision of the Third Division validating the contract? Even in the unlikely event that the en banc affirms the decision, the contract cannot be implemented because, besides its many illegalities and defects, it is not clear to whom the project belongs.

In case of doubt, don't.

Power

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FRANKIE Sionil Jose, a National Artist for Literature, had a very interesting letter last Friday, Mar. 1.

He has this friend, he said, a brilliant and fearless political leader, who reminds him of the late Jose Diokno. This fellow was his guest some nights ago, and his advice to him as far as advancing his political career was: don't. "I told this maverick politician that I hope, for the sake of the nation, he will not aspire for the presidency."

Though he understood that the image of Abraham Lincoln, who read books by candlelight in a log cabin and went on to become president, was writ large in the democratic imagination, Jose earnestly wanted to dissuade his guest from trying to live that dream. The reason for it was that the path to the presidency was paved with compromises. Becoming a president would give the fellow political capital but deprive him of integrity. Better that he kept out of it entirely and continued to "speak the truth, put sense and integrity in government, and most of all uphold moral standards."

It's a very interesting proposition, and one that clearly flies in the face of conventional wisdom. Conventional wisdom says the best and the brightest should be goaded and abetted to get to the head of the line at the door leading to Malacañang. That way we stand a chance of having a better government. Well, conventional isn't always right. I doubt it often is. Experience in this respect at least is on the side of unconventionality, and Jose.

I do not know that I would go so far as to dissuade brilliant people from going into politics. If for no other reason than that if they were truly brilliant, they would not need any dissuading: they would prefer to go into literature than into politics. But I share the general spirit in which Jose says these things. I myself have often wondered if the tendency toward mediocrity, or worse, unscrupulousness, was not inherent in public office. Including, and probably especially, elected office.

Elections are a wonderful thing, but they are not without their baneful aspects. Philippine elections, in particular. To win public office, the candidate, or his party, or both must spend a fortune, increasingly no longer a small one. I understand that in the last elections, several Metro Manila candidates spent more than P100 million each for a seat as mayor or congressman. What are they going to do after they become mayor or congressman? Spend their time serving the people?

And that isn't the worst of it. The worst of it, as I've seen with the shock of recognition after 1986, when free elections came back, is that the voters themselves conspire to make this so. Voters will not vote for candidates who go to them offering only themselves and an honest record. They will vote for candidates who offer basketball courts, repairs for decrepit cockpits, or, worse, cash. As a friend of mine, who got disillusioned on the campaign trail, put it: The voters themselves push you to be corrupt.

That is just the part about seeking power. The part about having power doubles the trouble. Having personally seen how friends have changed after joining government, turning their backs on the principles they once stood for, I have become cynical about the proposition that if you put the best and the brightest in power, you will get the best and brightest rule. In fact all that happens is that you end up with the worst and dumbest friends—or ex-friends, by mutual consent or a natural drifting apart.

There is a fundamental truth in the premise of "Lord of the Rings," which is why it has become a cult classic and a recent runaway hit. It is the age-old truth that power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Oriana Fallaci, who interviewed nearly all the powerful figures of her time, from Henry Kissinger (whom she absolutely detested) to King Hussein of Jordan (whom she regarded with a mixture of awe and fear) says pretty much the same thing from another angle, which is journalism. If she has learned anything from interviewing these people, she says, it is only to have a healthy distrust of power.

I don't know if we have any Frodos in this country who will be impervious to the effects of the ring of power. And at the risk of dismaying those who look forward to the subsequent movie installments of the trilogy, even Frodo got sorely tempted not to part with the ring after carrying it for some time. The last time we had someone possessed of the boundless virtue of ordinariness become president, he turned out to be the second most corrupt of them. That was of course Erap. The most corrupt remains the one possessed of the boundless virtue of intelligence, like Saruman, but also the boundless vice of unscrupulousness. Who was of course Marcos.

How to solve the problem of our governance given this monumental paradox?

I do not know. I used to repose my faith in civil society, or the NGO community. I used to think it would be the conscience of government, flailing at it with the merciless energy of a penitent. But the conduct of that community over the last several years has made me look askance at that alternative too. The conduct of NGO leaders during the previous government has made me wonder if the "non" in "non-government organizations" means that NGO people are not government by choice or only by lack of opportunity. And the conduct of NGO leaders during the current government has made me wonder whether "non-government organizations" should not be named instead "government-assisted Gloria organizations." (Feel free to create your own acronyms.)

There are days when you don't have answers, right or wrong. You only have questions, wise and foolish.

Yarn on Basilan payoff unbelievable

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

AN INTERESTING controversy rages at the Ateneo de Manila University over the plan of a group of college students to stage the Filipino version of "The Vagina Monologues" (TVM), translated into "Usapang Puki," at the university campus. TVM is a two-year-old play by playwright Eve Ensler in which women talk about the most intimate parts of their bodies to convey stories, based on actual testimonies, of all kinds of abuse and violence against them. A recent production of TVM was staged at the Folk Arts Theater as part of the month-long V-Day observance, featuring some of the best-known feminists here.

Four Ateneo female students planned to stage the play in Filipino at the Ateneo as the centerpiece of what they felt ought to be its own V-Day observance. Dr. Anna Miren Gonzalez-Intal, vice president of the Loyola Schools of Ateneo (formerly the College of Arts and Sciences), however, disapproved its staging as an "official activity" of the university, based on the evaluation of the play made by Dr. Cristina Astorga, chair of the Theology department. Both school officials, I understand, read the Filipino script and found it wanting in "serious" treatment of women's issues and dominated instead by the "physical image" of the "*puki*," a term "heard at almost every turn." Intal, however, made it clear that the school would not have any objection to the students' staging it on their own outside the school.

* * *

The ban stirred a hornet's nest on campus, and a number of faculty joined the outspoken students in denouncing it. Intal has formed an ad hoc committee composed of five highly respected faculty members to make recommendations on what the Loyola school's stand should be. Which is good, for she is being hit, among others, for the fact that her decision was not made after "proper consultations."

As I see it, there are two contrapuntal issues here. One is the students' right, as Monique Wilson, who heads the New Voice Company that's staging the play in various places, put it, to decide what their view of morality ought to be and the freedom to choose what they can view or not view, especially within the context of academic freedom. The complaining students feel that as college students, they have sufficient maturity to discern issues. The other side of the coin, however, is the university's responsibility as a "Jesuit Catholic" institution which, as Astorga put it, "operates within certain parameters and visions." I can understand the students' freedom, but I can also see why the Ateneo would hesitate to put its official imprimatur on "Usapang Puki."

* * *

That the school respects the students' freedom of choice is evident in the fact that it is allowing them to stage their own production—off campus. I think the students ought to recognize the tremendous responsibility the school carries not just toward its students, but toward other institutions that support it, such as the parents (who pay the students' tuition) and the alumni, and to uphold its educational philosophy as a Catholic institution.

The ad hoc committee's recommendation will be of tremendous import, for the Ateneo's decision can be likened to a landmark decision of the Supreme Court. If the school decides to allow the staging of TVM on campus, it would please perhaps the majority of students and faculty, but this could incur the ire of many parents and alumni. The Ateneo has always been regarded as the most "liberal" among Catholic schools, and now it has the unenviable plight of being caught between a rock and a hard place. A tough balancing act for the Ateneo.

* * *

This morning Maj. Gen. Romeo B. Dominguez, commanding general of the Army's 8th Infantry Division based in Eastern Visayas, will face the defense committee of the Commission on Appointments for the confirmation of his recent promotion to two-star rank. Dominguez has been hounded by the very serious allegation raised by Fr. Cirilo Nacorda that as commander of Joint Task Force Comet, he allowed the Abu Sayyaf to escape the military dragnet at the hospital in Lamitan, Basilan, in return for money. The evidence cited by Nacorda and some "witnesses" he brought with him is that the general's aide-de-camp allegedly was seen carrying an attaché case with a lot of money in it during the battle.

* * *

Frankly, I find this accusation very difficult to believe, and I'm happy to report that no one in the military believes it, too. The military family is a small one, and people inside know who are the rotten eggs. I know for a fact that Dominguez enjoys the respect not just of his peers but also of the retirees and the junior officers. They are all aghast at the wanton destruction of his good name, which has caused his family so much hurt. I have received a number of letters from military people, attesting to their faith in the general.

In the first place, the Army Inspector General, who investigated the case, found no evidence of wrong-doing. It said the Abu Sayyaf bandits were able to escape because they used the hostages as human shields, preventing the military from firing at them. As Dominguez put it, "Your soldiers make mistakes, but under no circumstances would they accept blood money." A number of so-called witnesses, who had earlier signed identical statements incriminating him, contradicted themselves during their oral testimony. Moreover, it doesn't make sense to make and receive payoffs in the middle of a raging battle involving one's own men. There has to be an easier way to make money.

Giving in to 'Illusione'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT seems that "Paula L.," whose account of an unpleasant incident with the proprietor of the store "Mango" was published in this space recently, has reason to hale the surly retailer to court or to the complaints desk of the Department of Trade and Industry.

A reader from Cebu says that department stores in that city are plastered with signs from the DTI reminding both customers and sales personnel that "the price tag prevails over the computer (POS scan) price." He says Paula has enough grounds to file a complaint with the DTI and perhaps be reimbursed for the excess amount she paid.

Lito Diwa from Sydney says that in Australia, the law holds that in case of a discrepancy among the price as advertised, the tag price and that indicated in the computer, "the lower price prevails." Lito says it happened to him on three occasions, and the store management had no choice but to let him pay the lowest price.

"Paula L." herself e-mailed to express her appreciation, adding that she had almost lost all hope that the media would pick up her complaint. I myself would not have used your account, Paula, if it hadn't been e-mailed to me by a lawyer friend who I know would not send me material of a dubious nature. Should you decide to take action, do tell me about it. We need to show arrogant foreign businesspeople here that no matter how much we may need foreign investments, they aren't allowed to flout the law or take their Filipino customers for granted.

***

"IT'S like a V-Day for gays!" I told the hubby as we walked away from "Illusione," and he laughed because, he said, he was about to tell me the same thing.

In fact, the show proper opened with three men engaged in what the program called "Gay Monologues," three men talking about growing up gay and coping with familial pressures and social restrictions. At some point in each monologue, the actor, talking in profile, suddenly turns around to reveal the "other half" of himself, dressed and made-up as a woman. But as the rest of the show reveals, clearly it's the "woman" part that has won. Or rather, the desire to be some uber-woman, for the "women" onstage for "Illusione" are so buffed, so polished, so larger-than-life that real-life women shirk in comparison.

But as "Oprah Winfrey," who threads the segments together, reminds the audience, everything in the show is "illusion," and losing oneself in the world of ersatz Broadway, pop divas and even "Swan Lake" is the point, the reason we were at Onstage in Greenbelt.

Indeed, it was sheer joy to jump headlong into the evening's program. While in the beginning, it's the verisimilitude, the "I-can't-believe-they're-not-women!" sentiment that prevails, as the show goes on, it's easy enough to lose oneself in the spectacle: the music, the sets, the dancing and costumes, even the acting. Soon, I no longer cared that the performers were actually men impersonating women, appreciating instead the sheer entertainment value. I particularly enjoyed the "Dancing Queen" segment from "Mama Mia!" the Broadway musicale based on Abba's music, as well as "Hello Dolly!" with the energetic chorus of waiters and a big-eyed "Carol Channing" essayed by James Cooper.

***

COOPER would also later make an appearance as "Diana Ross," and while he didn't dance or prance about as energetically as the younger performers, he did exude such magnetic stage presence that he reminded everyone that stage illusion is really all about feeling larger-than-life than filling up the stage.

Of the other divas, I was quite taken with "Tina Turner," who displayed even the requisite muscles and buffed body of this ageless rocker. I was all the more impressed when it turned out that "she" was sporting her real hair. So glossy, styled and luxuriant was it that I was sure it was a wig.

Also quite a hit was "Sharon Cuneta," who a friend tells me is a mainstay of the TV show "Spup." When she first appeared onstage, spotlighted in profile, she astounded with her amazing resemblance to the megastar, even nailing Sharon's trademark gestures and *pa*-sweet expressions. Hers may be a single shtick exploited to exhaustion, but it works, and I'm sure not even Sharon herself would begrudge this homage.

***

WHEN she called to invite me to watch "Illusione," Carmita Francisco, one of the show's three women producers (with Margie Moran-Floirendo and Nina Romualdez), promised a most entertaining evening, especially "our hilarious spoof of "Swan Lake."

The sight of muscled men clad in white tights and white tutus, "executing" the graceful moves of this classic ballet indeed made for raucous laughter. But I couldn't help wondering how my daughter, a dedicated student of ballet, would react to this "desecration." Choreographer Douglas Nierras starred as Odette, but the scene-stealer was the diminutive comedian who played a swan skewered by Prince Siegfried's arrow. "Makes me want to watch the real ballet," the hubby muttered, and I agreed. Watching the bumbling steps and comical lifts, I realized just how difficult—and enthralling—true ballet is.

At the end of the show, the performers or illusionists take their bows in their street clothes, and doff their wigs to reveal their "real" selves. But the audience had long forgotten or forgiven the fact that they had been merely perpetuating an illusion. By the show's close, we cared only that for two hours, we had been entertained by talented performers.

As "Oprah" urged us: "Celebrate our diversity!"

'Costumbres Chinas'

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L.Harper

WRITTEN in Spanish by Paz Yuchengco in 1961, the translated article should be of interest to observers of the different peoples who make up this country. The customs are from the province of Fukien in the center of China. These are not identical to those of other provinces even if the principal ceremonies are more or less alike.

"What is written here is a summary of all the Chinese customs and ceremonies that I have seen and learned during the past 18 years. My parents, being Christians and educated in the United States, hardly observed any of these until I married. In order not to loose face when they dealt with my in-laws, they had to learn and follow some of the most important. My parents and my in-laws were naturalized Filipinos as a result of which their manner of living accommodated itself to Filipino and American customs. But since my in-laws spent their youth in China, they maintained many of the relevant customs of that country and were confident that their descendents would do the same.

"The customs I present deal with childbirth, marriage and death. These are the three most important events in the life of any person. Each custom has its special and distinctive feel. Some are interesting, others ridiculous and many lack feeling.

"Before starting, the reader should know certain things about the character and manner of being of the Chinese. The woman always has to accept her inferior position from birth to death without complaint. There is a tremendous difference between the two sexes. The Chinese believe that a daughter is useless because she cannot work or support her parents; when she marries she changes her family name and her children become as strangers.

"Another trait of the Chinese is that respect for the old is the most important rule in any house; moreover the young should fulfill the desires of their elders humbly and without complaint. This is one of the reasons why it is nearly impossible to discard completely some of the old customs.

"Another peculiarity of the Chinese is the great importance they place on 'face-saving.' A Chinese will do anything to liberate himself and his family from the shame in the eyes of his neighbors. He is capable of selling everything he possesses just so he can acquire the many useless things that may be important to maintain the tradition of an important ceremony.

"There are certain symbols that are always present in every celebration. For the Chinese to recognize the characteristics of each one of them is important, and the young and most modern should be aware of this. A Chinese will be eternally embarrassed if he uses inappropriate symbols; the most common are eggs and noodles that should always be together and represent long life and good luck. Other symbols of good luck, health and fortune are mirrors, red paper and gold jewelry. Sweets represent the sweetness of life, as well as abundance of progeny. For the Chinese, rich or poor, like large families so that there are many symbols representing the idea of many children.

"There are as well symbols of bad luck, and one must recognize them in order to avoid any upsetting situations. For example, unless the party is being offered by a family in mourning, no one should go to a wedding or a birthday dressed in black. Another symbol of bad luck is the woman who has just given birth or is pregnant. The Chinese believe her to be impure.

***

"Chinese customs pertaining to childbirth:

"The Chinese prefer having a son rather than a daughter, whether they belong to a modern era or a previous one, rich or poor, Christian or Buddhist. At birth there is already a great difference between the sexes that is maintained until death. However, in rich Chinese families, when the eldest child is a girl, some of the ceremonies that correspond to a boy are performed. In general the maternal grandparents have to prepare the things that a boy needs such as diapers, clothes and crib and they order that a servant girl attend to the mother for a month. On the other hand, the paternal grandparents pay all the expenses during and after the birth. The new parents hardly have to do or spend anything.

"When she gives birth the woman gains some kind of importance, especially if she gives her in-laws the first male grandson. The first month the mother-in-law pays her much attention, gives her all kinds of nutritious and expensive food so that her milk will be rich and in consequence the grandchild will be healthy and robust.

"But despite all these attention, the mother experiences much suffering and discomfort. During this period there are many things forbidden her because they will bring bad luck or which she doesn't do because she's scared of her in-laws. She cannot take a bath or shampoo her hair or cry or drink cold water or use an electric fan or expose herself to the wind or leave the house or climb the stairs or eat fruits and vegetables.

"Even today many modern Chinese women follow these customs because their elders have convinced them of the unpleasant time they'll experience if they don't. A premature baby is a symbol of bad luck and there are those who believe that when they visit a house rats will come in too."

(To be continued)

Hair dye on my finger

YOUNGBLOOD

Iris Sheila G. Crisostomo

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.***

AT 26, I am as busy as any single young professional, juggling my hours between office and school, community and personal pursuits. I work eight hours a day from Mondays through Fridays as a corporate affairs officer in charge mainly of writing everything that goes into our company's quarterly magazine. Saturdays are devoted to school; my love for writing prompted me to pursue a graduate course in Creative Writing. Sundays, I join the activities of other single professionals as a member of Singles for Christ, a ministry of the Catholic renewal community of Couples for Christ. During vacant hours—and up to the wee hours of the morning when inspiration refuses to die—I write short stories, poems and plays.

With all these activities, the time I spend at home has been reduced to what I need to eat my meals and sleep. If *balikbayans'* favorite line is, "I miss home," mine would be, "My home misses me."

My mother is the first to complain. But she does it quite discreetly, asking me if I never get tired being out of the house most of the time. "Take time to stay home and rest," she would often suggest. But I know she means, "Stay home and spend time with the family."

I think mothers have a secret wish to have their children around the house, even if only during weekends. The reasons may vary: They want a helping hand to finish the chores (Can you at least clean your room?). They want to know the latest news (I didn't know you have a new boyfriend!). Or they just want to calm their nerves (My daughter is safely tucked in her bed).

The time I spend with the family should be more than the brief encounters we have at the dining table, because it was during these rare instances when I was at home that I learned a valuable lesson—thanks to an ugly blotch of hair dye on my forefinger.

How did it happen? It was about three o'clock in the afternoon. My mother was still rejoicing over my decision to stay at home that Sunday. She was exclaiming, "*Hay salamat, makapagpapatina na ako. Ilang linggo ko nang gustong magpatina. Tingnan mo't puti na lahat.* (Finally, I can have my hair dyed. It has been weeks since I've wanted to have them dyed. Look, all the strands are white.)"

I'm my mother's hairdresser when it comes to dyeing her hair. She finds it more convenient and economical to have it done at home than at the salon. Besides, she wouldn't need to sit in line waiting for her turn.

When applying dye, one really has to take all the precautionary measures. These include doing the sensitivity test: applying a sample of the dye on the skin to check for any allergic reactions. Once this is done, one can proceed with the application.

Since my mother has been using the same brand of hair dye, no test was necessary that Sunday. So we immediately proceeded to the application of the dye.

Hands in gloves, I mixed the color cream with the solution then applied the mixture on my mother's hair, squirting the cream and combing it in. Then I squirted it again and combed it in.

My mother has short hair, so it isn't difficult to apply dye. But the difficulty lies with the graying strands which I find quite stubborn and resistant to dye, requiring longer setting hours than usual. She actually prefers brown to reddish shades but the stubborn strands give her no other choice but to use the darker tones.

In about 15 minutes, we were done. We allowed 40 more minutes of setting time before she rinsed her hair and toweled it dry. She came out of the bathroom with a big smile, her hair wrapped in a towel.

As I began throwing away all the used paraphernalia, I took off the gloves, careful not to smear my hands with dye. It was only after a while that I noticed a dark blotch on my fingernail. I immediately scrubbed it with soap. The scrubbing only reduced it to an ugly stain.

The stain on my nail made me cranky the entire week. It was like a curse that refused to go away. Whenever I'd spread my fingers to point out something on paper, I'd immediately curl it back, embarrassed at the sight of the ugly stain. My hands looked filthy, unwashed, even abominable. It reminded me of the indelible ink applied to the forefinger during elections, except that the ink was there for a purpose. The dye was a mark of clumsiness.

One night, after arriving home late from work, I saw my mother combing her hair before the bedroom mirror. She was quietly admiring its dark color which enhanced her fair skin.

"Your hair looks good." I complimented her.

She nodded saying, "*Bagay sa akin ang pagkaitim. Hindi ako mukhang matanda.* (The dark shade suits me well. I don't look old.)"

I could tell she was satisfied with her hair and the way she looked. But something made me stop to take a second look at her. I could see that she was beaming with a certain kind of happiness. At that moment, I realized how important it was for my mother to have her hair that way. A 15-minute beauty ritual of applying a simple hair dye was enough to bring gladness to her. The hair dye on my finger that made me cranky the whole week was the same dye that brought a smile to my mother's lips.

I guess mothers have a way of surprising their children with the things that please them. It's not always that favorite perfume. It's not always that bunch of roses. It can be simply a hug, a kiss, or even the simple act of spending time at home.

The dye that made me cranky for one week has now faded. It's hardly even noticeable now. But it has definitely left a mark somewhere. I think that in doing things for others, we must be ready to get tainted in the process. What's important is that we make others happy. Then the dark blotch will hardly be noticeable.

Iris Sheila G. Crisostomo, 26, finished her BA Communication Arts at the University of the Philippines Los Baños and is now pursuing her master's in Creative Writing at De La Salle University. She also attends the Playwrights Development Program of the Philippine Educational Theater Association.

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Sin's remarks part of ordinary language

"*BAKIT galit na galit siya kay Erap?*" asks Sen. Loi Estrada, referring to Jaime Cardinal Sin's recent sermon at the Edsa Shrine.

Unless it is like what is called "holy anger," Christians must refrain from the kind of "*galit*" that is hate-filled or vengeful. But sometimes we are unable to contain ourselves. We blurt out things, for "out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks."

The senator's comment, however, was too strongly worded. "*Galit na galit*" suggests something akin to hatred. Was it?

Actually, the cardinal made no mention of names, much less did he give vent to anger or hatred. In general terms, the context of his statement was that of forgiveness. But he said the dispensation of forgiveness must not allow a repetition of such (criminal) acts that would mock us in the face, make fun of us, or make fools of us.

Politicking? Call it what you may. To me, that was ordinary language in a civilized world.

—LOURDES OBEN SANTOS, Marietta-Romeo Village, Sta. Lucia, Pasig City

Excellence through competition

I AM very disappointed with the position taken by the Basketball Coaches Association of the Philippines, headed by Chito Narvasa, on the appointment of Bill Bayno as TNT head coach.

In an era of open competition in all aspects of international life, whether in the business, economic, entertainment and sporting scenes, the guiding principle is to achieve excellence by tapping resources available at one's command. The only limitation is the competitor's own financial resources.

If Manuel V. Pangilinan, (or MVP as he is generally known) who has always been known as a fierce competitor in the business field, wants to come up with a champion team in the PBA and use whatever available resource at his command to achieve this goal, why is he now being castigated? MVP should in fact be thanked, since he is in effect trying to elevate local coaching standards to international levels. Right now, it still remains to be seen if hiring Bayno will bear fruit, but for just taking that risky first step, I take my hat off to MVP, whom I respect for the very dynamic, visionary and totally committed approaches he takes in everything he does.

What Narvasa and his colleagues should tackle instead is the challenge that has been posed to them in the only court where the Filipino coach can be tested: the basketball court. Do they measure up to the "international" standard that Bayno represents.

Being pro-Filipino does not mean trying to protect available jobs only for Filipinos. The real test of patriotism is in helping Filipino coaches fulfill their potentials and achieve international competitiveness, something which MVP has successfully proven in his very illustrious business career. (Filipino business executives, with the guidance of MVP, have measured up to international caliber businessman in the highly competitive Hong Kong environment.)

I hope Narvasa and his colleagues will not shy away from the latest challenge and instead take this positively as an opportunity to raise standards in professional coaching.

—DANILO A. ANTONIO, president, Landexcel Consulting Inc., 83 Legaspi Suites, 178 Salcedo St., Legaspi Vill., Makati City

Cases filed vs Prime Savings

THIS refers to the letter of Leo Magno (PDI, 2/23/02) asking the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas "to firm up its resolve to file appropriate charges against the errant officers of the closed Prime Savings Bank."

We would like to inform him and other Prime Savings Bank depositors and creditors that from March 10 to July 26, 2000, the Bangko Sentral filed with the Department of Justice four criminal charges against certain Prime Savings Bank officials for violation of Section 35 (False Statement) of RA 7653 (otherwise known as the New Central Bank Act) which penalizes the willful making of false or misleading statements on a material fact to the Monetary Board or to the examiners of the Bangko Sentral. After preliminary investigation, the DOJ filed the corresponding criminal information with the Metropolitan Trial Court of San Juan, Metro Manila, Branch 58, under Criminal Case Nos. 76194-76195 and 76489-76490. These cases are now being trial. The prosecution has already rested its case, and it is now the turn of the defense to present its evidence.

Likewise, the Bangko Sentral is continuing its investigation of other cases of violations of banking laws, rules and regulations that may have been committed by Prime Savings Bank officials.

We would like to assure Mr Magno and others similarly situated that the Bangko Sentral will not leave any stone unturned in bringing to justice all those responsible for the collapse of Prime Savings Bank.

—VICENTE S. AQUINO, director, Office of Special Investigation, Rm. 311, Five-Storey Building, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Malate, Manila

Separation of church and state violated

THIS refers to Dean Jorge Bocobo's column, entitled "Ecumenism for a flawed democracy," last Feb. 18, 2002.

There is truth in his observation, and it is relevant especially here in Mindanao which is now the scene of important developments.

The Constitution provides that there shall be separation of Church and state. But apparently the state has closed one eye to an obvious infringement of this principle by allowing the Catholic Church to hold Masses in municipal and city halls even during office hours, at the expense of public service. It has even allowed Catholics to install religious images inside city and municipal halls which is unacceptable to the Islamic and Jewish religion and other non-Catholics.

Says Bacobo:

"I refer to the profane Masses in national government offices; chapels, at military camps exclusively for Catholics (others must walk kilometers outside to worship); and all the culpable and obvious, violations of the Constitution that disunite our nations. The Church should lead an ecumenical movement to right this democracy."

No wonder, Muslim rebels refer to the Constitution as: "Your Constitution, not mine." I hope more citizens will be as vigilant and as concerned as Dean Jorge Bocobo.

—ABUBAKAR ABDULLAH, Salmonan, Davao City

A 'solution' that only transfers the problem

THIS is in response to the government's enactment of the law enhancing the creation of an Asset Management Corporation (AMC) owned wholly or partially by financial institutions.

Though the law will temporarily relived the banks of the problem of having non-performing assets, it is at best a stop-gap measure or another Enron-like move—just accounting entries to hide something from public scrutiny.

Why? The measure will only transfer the problem to a newly created corporation with minimal expense. The problem will still be there.

We think that the real solution lies in restoring the marketability of the non-performing assets. All the government has to do is to reduce and consolidate the charges on the non-performing assets (mostly real estate) to one percent or 1.5 percent, all inclusive, in lieu of the 10 percent VAT, 1.5 percent transfer fees, etc. on real estate transactions. Such reductions should not be limited to only the present holders of these non-performing assets but also to all future investors.

The purchase of foreign shares of non-performing assets at 70 percent discount deserves a second look. Instead of charging the borrower-owners exorbitant interest, penalties, legal fees, etc., the present NPA holders should offer a special 50 percent discount on outstanding balance, and the borrowers will surely buy it. After all, who will be the buyers of these foreign investors but the present borrowers themselves.

There is no need for an intermediary to accomplish the desired liquification. Just a restoration of the assets' marketability through reduction of charges to one percent or 1.5 percent and an irresistible offer of a 50-percent discount.

—JOSE PIO L. HERNANDEZ, Goldwell Properties & Resources Inc., Unit 8, No. 56 Hernandez Townhomes, Hernandez Ave., Pasay City

Barangay folk paying for repair of bridge

THE DECISION of residents of Nursery Site in Barangay Masin, Candelaria, Quezon, to shoulder the cost of reconstruction of the Sabang Hills bridge that connects it to adjoining barangays is very commendable. But it will be embarrassing for Mayor David Emralino. That is, if the mayor is sensitive enough.

The local government has time and again vowed to rebuild the bridge, and failed. So every household has volunteered to contribute money to finance the project after 10 years of waiting for the authorities to take the initiative. The bridge is on the verge of collapse but no one seems to care about the danger it poses to human lives. So urgent is the problem that the residents are now taking over the responsibility that has been shirked by the town officials. Aside from the Mayor, this is a concern for Rep. Lynnette Punzalan.

There could be no project worthier of support from Punzalan's Countrywide Development Funds (CDF) than the reconstruction of the bridge that could ensure comfort, safety, better economic activity and progress of the communities in his district.

Commuters and vehicles are forced to negotiate long, rough roads to reach their destinations. Dilapidated roads which are impassable during rainy days also need urgent repair.

—JOE MARQUEZ, Daanbatang, Moonwalk, Las Piñas City

Junior Inquirer
The Toys 'n-No Tears Hospital Visit
...And the animals loved them back
Summer Cartoon Special
300-Foot Long Painting!
Every Saturday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer
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Revenge

PINOY KASI

Michael Tan

"DO you want revenge?" the reporter asked the young boy in Tagalog. The boy's sister had been beaten to death by classmates.

"No," the boy answered even as he struggled with his grief. "It is not right to want revenge."

The reporter persisted: "But don't you want to do to them what they did to your sister?"

The boy paused, obviously tormented, and then finally replied, as any obedient child would do, "*Opo.*"

I am paraphrasing the interview, which appeared on one of those police-beat television shows the other night. I rarely watch shows like that because I don't see what purpose they serve. These shows are part of the trend toward "tabloidizing" the media. They claim to have moral lessons for the public—usually in the form of dire "You won't get away" warnings to criminals—but really cater to the more prurient interests of the public with their gory reenactment of rape and murder.

But I was particularly upset by this segment about revenge. Here was a child whose moral compass was apparently set right, now confronted by a TV reporter who throws him off track. The message we're sending out is that it is not only right, but imperative, to want revenge.

It isn't just these police beat shows. Television newscasts—curiously the Tagalog ones and not those in English—routinely show police station scenes where victims confront suspects for crimes ranging from pickpocketing to rape. The victims pounce on the suspects, showering blows while the police watch at the side for a few seconds, obviously amused, before trying to separate them.

All this certainly isn't limited to the Philippines. We are bombarded in local and American police-beat shows, newscasts and statements from the world's leaders, all the way up to US President George Bush, with these messages: it is all right to want revenge; it's all right to beat the hell out of whoever tormented you (or even those who didn't torment you but who are suspected of harboring your tormentors, as in the case of Afghanistan). In this 21st century, our definition of justice harks back to the hunting-gathering era.

In our blood-thirsty vengeful times, we find there are people who dare to be different. The little boy I mentioned at the beginning of this article, until he was "persuaded" to conform—and Mariane Pearl. I'm referring to the widow of the American journalist Daniel Pearl who was brutally murdered two weeks ago by Pakistani terrorists. The widow, herself a journalist, was seven months pregnant. In a statement issued shortly after her husband's death, Mariane reflects: "Revenge would be easy, but it is far more valuable in my opinion to address this problem of terrorism with enough honesty to question our own responsibility as nations and as individuals for the rise of terrorism."

Mariane reminds us the war against terrorism takes many forms. Her husband had died as part of this war without guns. He had gone off to interview people claiming to be part of the Pakistani militant underground, living up to the mission of the journalist to get all sides to a story. Mariane talks about how she will tell her son "that his father carried the flag to end terrorism, raising an unprecedented demand among people from all countries not for revenge but for the values we all share: love, compassion, friendship and civilization far transcending the so-called clash of civilizations."

There is grief in Mariane's statement: "Danny is my life. They may have taken my life, but they did not take my spirit." And there is anger as Mariane labels the execution "an act of barbarism." But there is courage, too, far more intense and inspiring than the kind you see in the calls for and acts of vengeance. Mariane rightly recognizes that her husband's murder was the terrorists' way of making people retreat, "forever threatened by their ruthlessness." But she refuses to be cowered: "I trust that our struggle will ultimately serve the greater purpose of resisting those evil people casting a shadow upon our world."

There is an amazing compassion in this woman, an ability to reach out to others even in times of great personal tragedy. In an interview with CNN, Mariane talked about the roots of terrorism, including "a lack of hope, lack of scope for people." She observed how, in the month of February alone, 10 Pakistanis were also killed by terrorists: "So they're suffering as much as we are, right?"

Mariane has her own call to arms: "No individual alone will be able to fight terrorism. No state alone will be able to wage this battle. We need to overcome cultural and religious differences, motivating our governments to work hand in hand with each other, perhaps in an unprecedented way...We are all going to need courage and commitment. Let us inspire each other to goodness."

Inspire each other to goodness. It is an important reminder for everyone, but I think the message is even more important for those of us working in print and broadcast media.

A full transcript of Mariane's statement can be found on abcnews.go.com while the interview's transcript is on cnn.com. I recommend both documents to teachers who like to instill alternative values in young Filipinos.

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India riots claim nearly 550 lives

AHMEDABAD, India—India began picking up the pieces Monday after days of bloody sectarian riots that claimed nearly 550 lives and raised fundamental questions over the country's political and social unity.

In the western state of Gujarat, there were no reports of any fresh violence following four days of fearsome Hindu-Muslim clashes.

Security in the state was largely in the hands of the Army, which was deployed in Gujarat's riot-torn cities on Friday as it became alarmingly clear that the police were either incapable or unwilling to prevent the bloodletting.

"The state is responsible for the security of every single citizen irrespective of the religion and the community he adheres to," Home Minister L.K. Advani said as he toured areas of Gujarat on Sunday.

But there are many who feel that the state—both in Gujarat and in New Delhi—has failed woefully to live up to that responsibility.

"Last week was one of the most brutal that this nation has ever had the misfortune of experiencing, one in which India failed to protect its greatest asset—its integral unity based on communal harmony," the Indian Express newspaper said in an editorial.

Police officials in Gujarat's commercial capital Ahmedabad said 486 people had been killed in rioting across the state, since Wednesday morning's attack on a train carrying Hindu activists that left 58 dead, including women and children.

The vast majority of riot victims were believed to be Muslims.

"Everything we had, our home, our possessions, our money, it's all gone," said Rehmat Bibi, sheltering along with several hundred Muslim families in a well-guarded Ahmedabad mosque.

Bibi and her family were lucky to survive after a mob of more than 1,000 Hindus attacked a Muslim residential district for close on five hours on Friday night, looting, burning and killing.

Bibi said the police did nothing to control the mob, which only dispersed once the Army arrived on the scene.

"Now we have no house to go back to," she said. "And even if we did, what guarantee is there for our safety? These troops won't stay forever."

Curfews remained in place Monday in several areas of Ahmedabad, as well as other Gujarati cities, but the state authorities said they would review their imposition if the situation remained calm.

"Our first priority is to work for a return to normalcy along with the Army and then try to see what has to be done with those who are feeling unsafe," said joint police commissioner M.K. Tandon.

While the violence was for the most part restricted to Gujarat, its ramifications have been far-reaching, with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee acknowledging a sense of national "disgrace" and the harm to India's image overseas.

Sectarian tensions in Gujarat and elsewhere in India are likely to remain at simmering point over the next two weeks as the government struggles to defuse a volatile row over a disputed religious site in the northern town of Ayodhya. **AFP**

Shame, regret over Muslim neighbors burned alive

By Beth Duff-Brown

SADARPUR, India—The charred corpses are gone, as are all those who survived the fire. But shame and regret are ever-present in this Hindu village where 28 Muslims were burned alive.

Eyes were mostly cast down on Sunday. The villagers gave tentative smiles and abashed hellos in the winding alleyways still littered with the destruction of a Hindu mob that hunted down the local Muslims on Friday night, rounded them up and set them on fire.

Six children were among those killed. Police said two adults were electrocuted by live wires jammed through the windows of the sky-blue concrete house where several families had barred themselves in.

The mob, some 4,500-strong according to local police, then threw homemade kerosene bombs through the windows. In minutes, most of those inside the 10-by-10-foot house perished in flames or from lack of air.

"I've been living here since 1962 and we never had any conflict between the Hindus and Muslims," said Someshwer Pandya, 68, a retired social worker, as he wandered along Sheikh Mohalla, the dirt alley of tin-roofed shacks where some 150 Muslims lived until Friday.

"I'm very upset. We regret what has happened here, but what's done is done. They will never come back," Pandya said, his palms up and his head bobbing in an expression of Hindu fatalism.

Muslims sparked the wave of violence that has gripped this western state of Gujarat since last Wednesday, when a group of them attacked a trainload of Hindu nationalists and lighted a train car on fire. The 58 deaths in Godhra provoked the retaliatory rampage by Hindus.

Most of those killed since then have been Muslims, many burned alive by revengeful Hindus. As of Sunday, the death toll stood at 485.

It's the worst Hindu-Muslim violence in India since 1993, when 800 people were killed during religious riots in Bombay. That violence was a spillover from nationwide riots the year before, when 2,000 people were killed in riots after Hindus destroyed a 16th-century Muslim mosque.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee called this week's murdering rampage a blot on the history of India, where some 120 Muslims live in relative harmony among 1 billion Hindus and other minorities.

"No one has the right to take the law into their hands," said Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi, the state's highest elected official, in a Star News TV interview on Sunday. "These incidents should make our heads hang in shame."

On the first day of killing, however, when the death toll had reach more than 75, Modi had commended the Hindu people of the state for "showing restraint" in the wake of the train attack, and he was widely criticized for not mobilizing police and the Army faster to halt the violence.

In Sadarpur, Pandya said some Hindus had tried to rescue the Muslims, as they jumped over a brick wall between their impoverished alley and an Islamic cemetery. The Hindus sneaked their neighbors into their homes and hid them until the violence subsided and they could help get them out of town.

"There were some saved by Hindus. But they were afraid and couldn't do much more," he said. "Now the Muslims will never come back."

Most in the village did not want to talk about what had happened to their Muslim neighbors, who were field laborers and odd jobbers. **AP**

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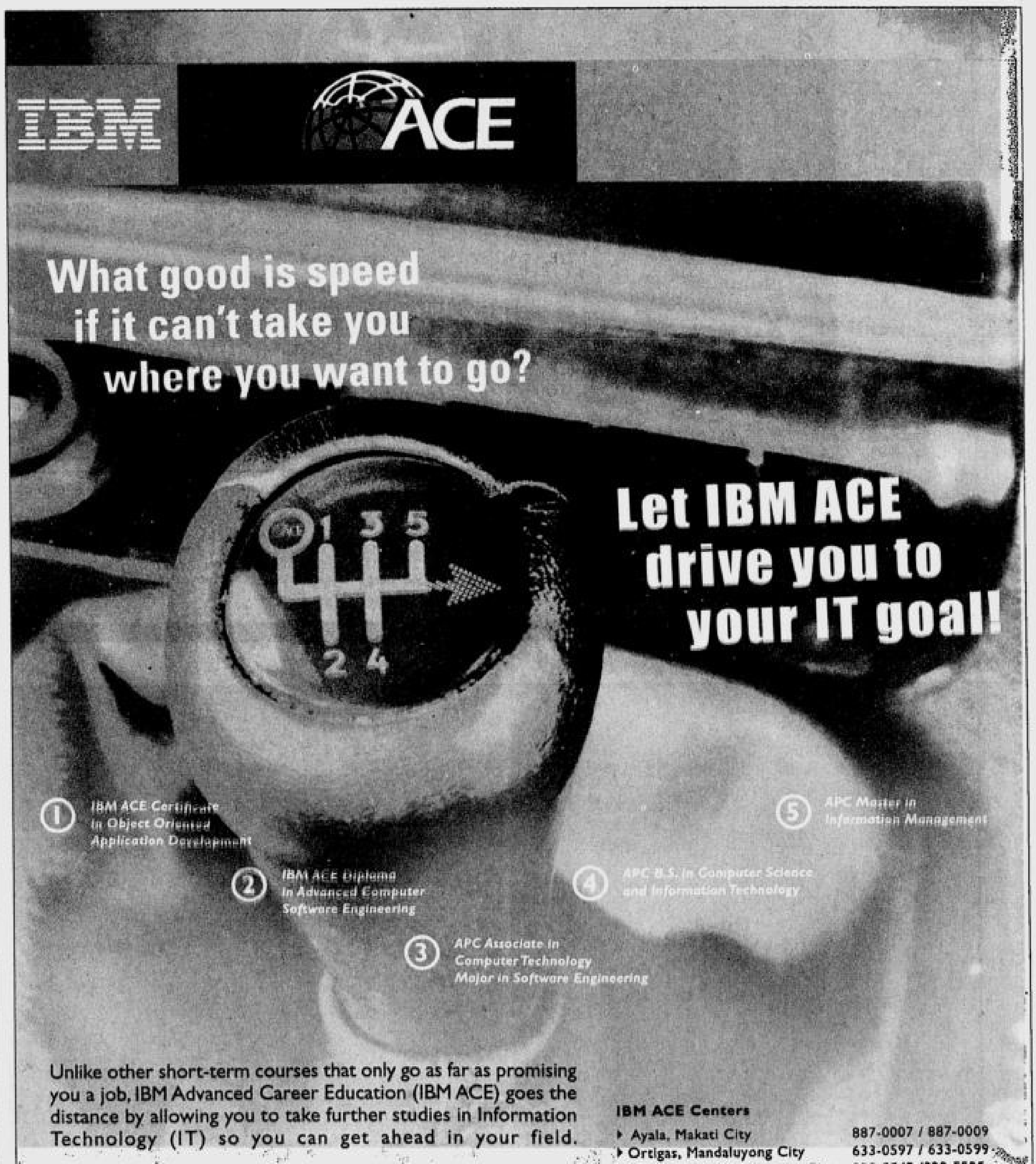
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RETALIATION FOR WEEKEND SLAYS

Israel troops turn up heat on Palestinians

JERUSALEM—Israel on Monday turned up the heat on the Palestinians in retaliation for the weekend killing of 21 Israelis, making overnight incursions into two refugee camps which left at least three Palestinians dead.

Meeting late on Sunday, the security Cabinet of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said in a statement it had unanimously "approved principles of operation presented by the Army to exert ongoing pressure on the Palestinian Authority and terror organizations."

What that meant, an official close to Sharon said, was that the government would take harsher military action in the Palestinian territories, including more air strikes and operations similar to last week's raids into the West Bank refugee camps which left more than 20 Palestinians and two soldiers dead.

In a sign of Tel Aviv's resolve shortly after the announcement, Israeli tanks rolled into a refugee camp at Rafah in the south of the Gaza Strip early on Monday, killing three Palestinians during a four-hour Army incursion.

Palestinian security sources said the Israeli Army entered the camp, which lies near the border with Egypt, at 1 a.m., firing shells and automatic weapons and destroying four of the camp's dwellings with bulldozers. Palestinians responded with Kalashnikov fire.

The Army then started to withdraw at 4:45 a.m.

Shortly after that incursion ended, ten Israeli tanks drove into Jenin refugee camp in the northern West Bank sparking clashes with Palestinian militants, Palestinian security sources reported.

The tanks shelled the area as two Israeli helicopter gunships sprayed machinegun fire at the militants. No injuries were reported. *AFP*

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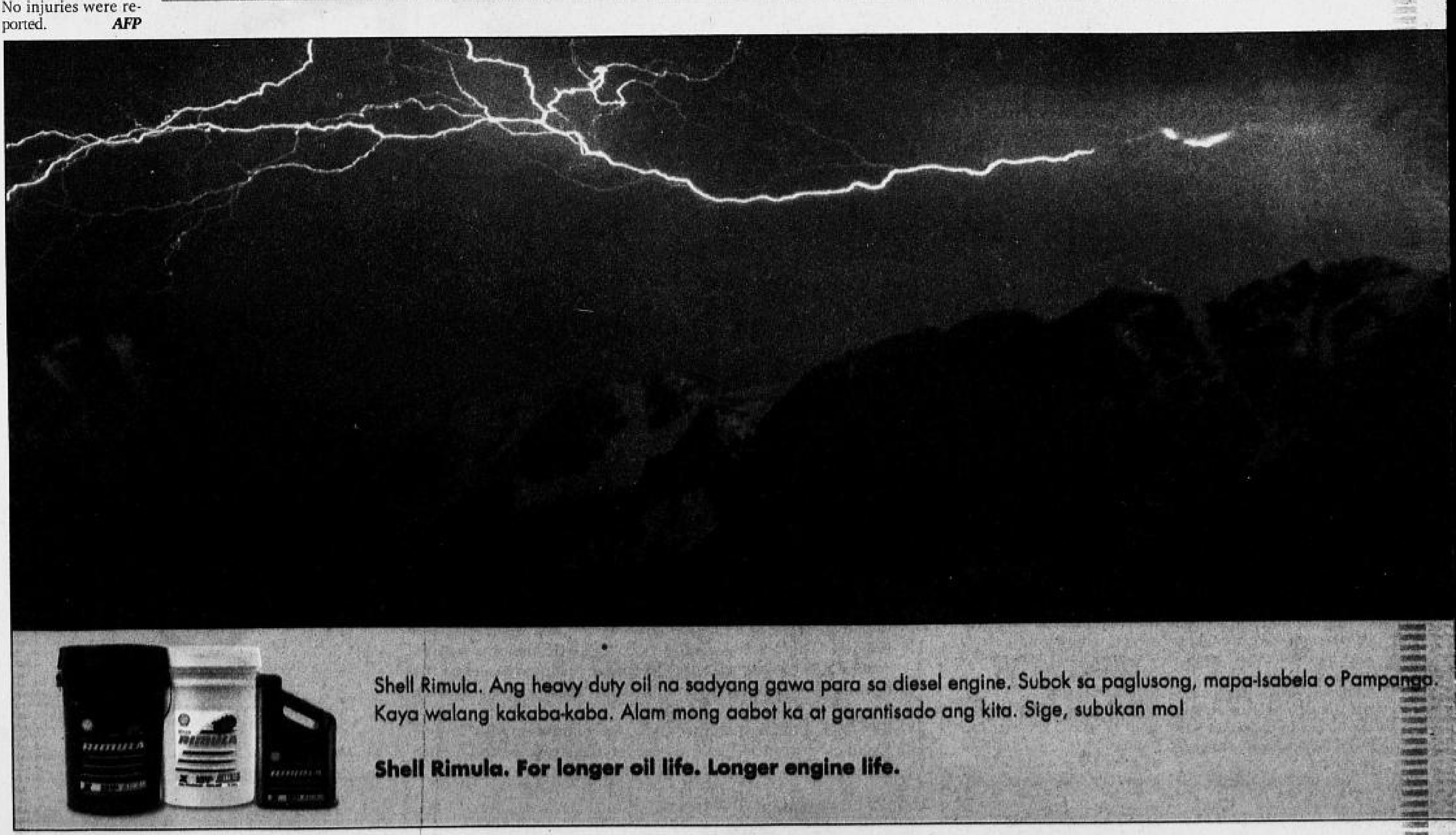

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CLIFFHANGER VOTE

Swiss to join UN after decades on sidelines

GENEVA—Switzerland voted narrowly to join the United Nations in a historic referendum on Sunday, after decades on the sidelines of the global club of nations.

After a cliffhanger vote, 54.6 percent of Swiss voters backed the proposal, which also won the support of a slender majority of 12 of the country's 23-full cantons, according to official results.

The result paves the way for staunchly neutral Switzerland to formally join the world body at a session of the UN General Assembly in September.

"It's a great day for Switzerland, which will now become a full member of the UN," a beaming and visibly relieved Foreign Minister Joseph Deiss told journalists.

To gain approval, the government-backed proposal needed a majority both of voters nationwide and at least half of Switzerland's 20 cantons and six smaller half-cantons.

Sunday's result overturned an overwhelming rejection of UN membership in a similar referendum in 1986 as voters cast aside warnings from a pugnacious anti-UN lobby which claimed that the country's neutrality would be undermined.

But Deiss said: "Switzerland will remain a sovereign state, a neutral country and a strong country."

Since the creation of the United Nations in 1945 after World War II, Switzerland, although a member of several UN humanitarian and technical agencies, has refused to take on the political trappings of full membership.

In recent years, it has played a lonely role alongside the Vatican as an observer at the United Nations.

But in the past decade the government, backed by most political parties, the business community and trade unions had argued that end of the Cold War meant that UN membership no longer threatened neutrality. **AFP**

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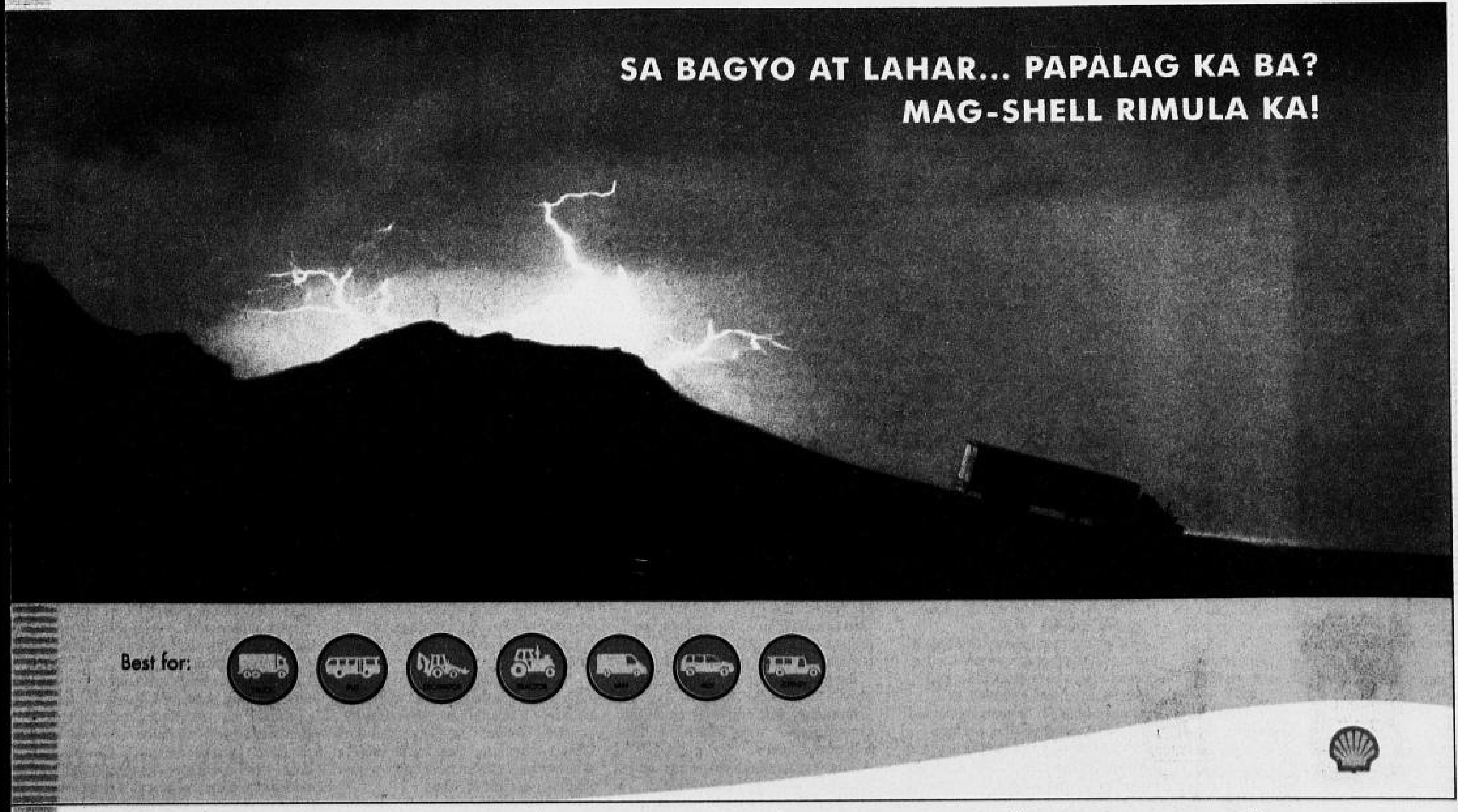

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US-led coalition prepares for new Afghan push

GARDEZ, Afghanistan—US troops, backed by forces from seven coalition nations as well as allied Afghan troops, were poised to resume their push Monday against more than 2,000 suspected al-Qaida and Taliban fighters in eastern Afghanistan.

The US military said Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany and Norway had contributed forces to the biggest offensive so far this year against al-Qaida and Taliban holdouts regrouping in the snow-capped Amra mountains honeycombed by caves.

US and Afghan officials spoke of fierce and intense fighting against a stubborn enemy who had apparently resisted the might of the allied force backed by air power.

However, the enemy forces holed up in the mountainous region southeast of Gardez were fewer than had been widely reported, according to Central Command spokesperson Maj. Ralph Mills.

"It is not 4,000 to 5,000 that we're seeing in the media—we are talking in hundreds," he said.

The Tampa, Florida-based Central Command, which is in charge of the military operation in Afghanistan, said that one US soldier and three troops belonging to allied Afghan forces had been killed in the offensive and an unspecified number of US and allied troops injured.

There was no confirmation of reports Sunday that the tally of wounded numbered in the dozens, he said, adding that all US injuries were "non-life threatening."

An Afghan soldier in Gardez said six soldiers—one US and five Afghans—had been killed in Saturday's attacks.

Central Command said that the United States had unveiled a new weapon during the fighting, the thermobaric bomb, but declined to say if more than one of the so-called "vacuum bombs" had been among the 270 bombs dropped by coalition aircraft to date.

"Aircraft have targeted vehicles, mortars, enemy troop locations, caves and anti-aircraft artillery sites," the Central Command said. "Firefights continue to be intense at times in heavy combat actions."

Allied Afghan troops in Gardez, the provincial capital of Paktia province, said Taliban and al-Qaida forces were putting up stout resistance to the allied offensive 20 km southeast of the city.

They said they had been forced to retreat under rocket and mortar fire from enemy positions.

Taliban and al-Qaida fighters were also battling troops loyal to Afghan interim leader Hamid Karzai on Sunday, in neighboring Logar province, according to an official from the state Bakhtar news agency.

The United States launched a military offensive in Afghanistan on Oct. 7, after the then-ruling Taliban regime refused to hand over Osama bin Laden, accused of masterminding the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States.

The whereabouts of Bin Laden—leader of the al-Qaida network of terror operatives believed to have carried out the suicide plane strikes on US targets that left some 3,000 dead—are unknown.

US-led operations in Afghanistan are part of a wider war on terrorism declared by Washington in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks. *AFP*

Colombia rebs torture, kill senator

BOGOTA, Colombia—A Colombian senator was tortured and killed while attempting to convince leftist rebels to free two kidnap victims, police said on Sunday, blaming the slaying on FARC guerrilla fighters.

Sen. Martha Catalina Daniels was shot execution style with two bullets to the head. Her body showed signs of torture and was found in a ravine off a country road about 40 km west of Colombia's capital, Bogota, police said.

Daniels' murder came ahead of March 10 congressional elections, now largely overshadowed by a wave of violence following the collapse in peace talks with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, late last month.

Authorities said Daniels, a member of the opposition Liberal Party, had been trying to negotiate with the FARC for the release of Ricardo Tafur Gonzales and Christian Mauricio Rodriguez, kidnapped by the Marxist-inspired rebels last year.

"Unfortunately, everything indicates that this is part of the terrorism being waged by the FARC," Colombian Attorney General Luis Camilo Osorio said.

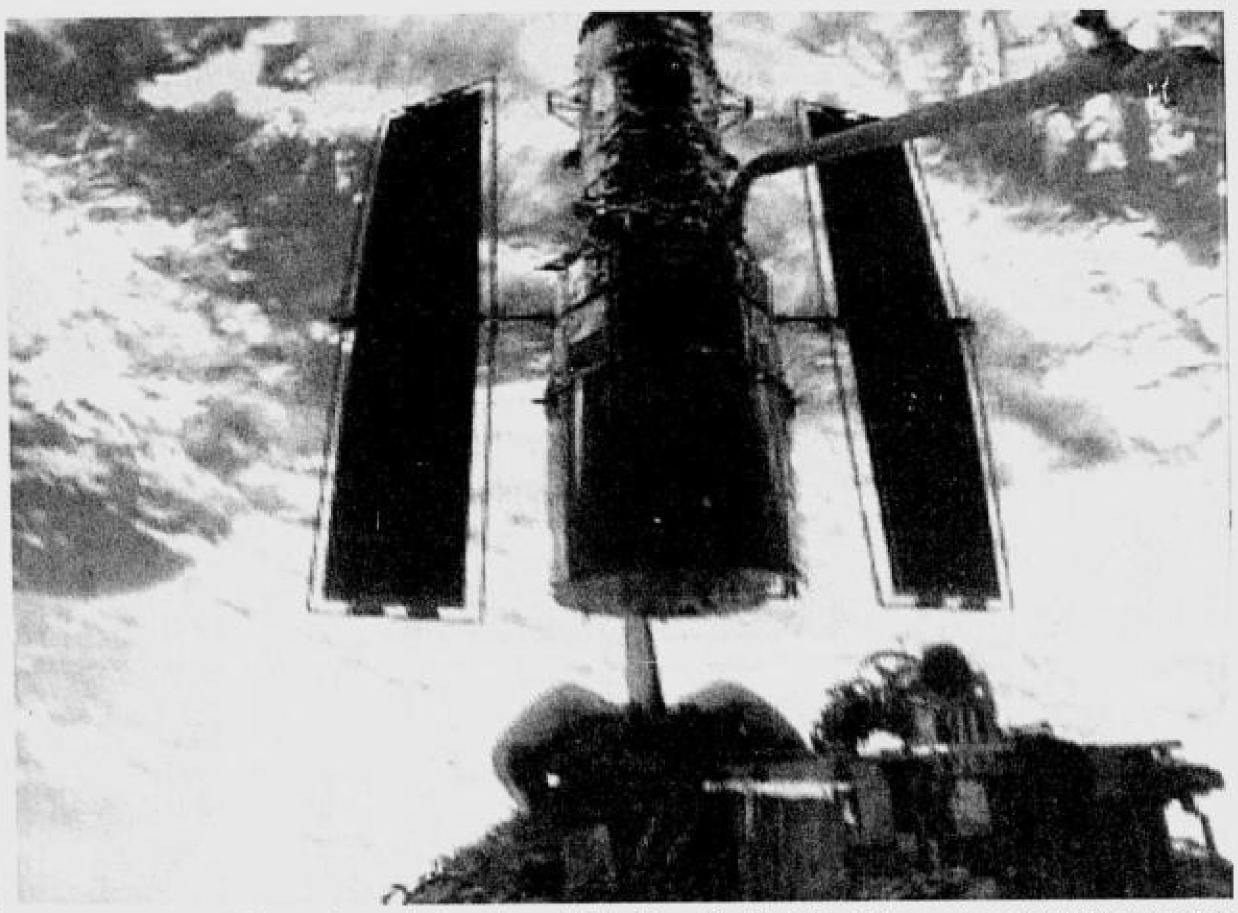
Daniels was the fourth member of Congress slain since mid-2001, as Colombia's 38-year-old guerrilla war escalates. The conflict has claimed 40,000 lives in a decade.

The FARC, Latin America's oldest and largest rebel force, has not commented on the senator's murder.

Colombian President Andres Pastrana broke off three years of peace talks with the rebels late last month, following the FARC's hijacking of a commercial airplane and kidnapping of a senator.

The FARC, branded drug trafficking "terrorists" by the United States, kidnapped and are holding five lawmakers and presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt—abducted on Feb. 23—in hopes of swapping them for jailed rebel leaders.

The government has said it would not release rebels from prison. Last week, it rejected a FARC ultimatum giving Bogota one year to make an exchange before rebels take "appropriate actions," presumably killing their hostages. *AFP*



THE HUBBLE Space Telescope is attached to the end of the Space Shuttle Columbia's remote manipulator arm as it is moved to a secure dock in the payload bay by astronaut Nancy Currie, March 3. The orbital observatory will be updated by two sets of spacewalking astronauts during five days of spacewalks. REUTERS/NASA

Astronauts set to repair Hubble telescope

HOUSTON, Texas—Astronauts were preparing to begin repair and renovation work Monday on the Hubble space telescope safely confined in the hold of the US Space Shuttle Columbia.

Columbia's seven astronauts, under the command of Scott Altman, are scheduled to make the most ambitious series of space walks ever undertaken on a single mission starting Monday.

The Hubble was loaded into the space shuttle's hold early Sunday after the shuttle glided into position beside the orbiting telescope some 565 km over Australia.

Astronaut Nancy Currie, 43, an Army lieutenant colonel making her fourth flight, used the shuttle's 15-meter robot arm to pluck the 12.5-ton Hubble from its orbit and set it gingerly into the shuttle's cargo bay.

"Outstanding job. A flawless rendezvous," said Nasa launch commentator Rob Navias.

The first two space walks will focus on replacing Hubble's flexible solar panels with rigid panels one third the size, double the weight and able to provide 20 percent more energy.

The first spacewalk is scheduled to take place from Monday, with astronauts John Grunsfeld and Rick Linnehan working on replacing the solar panels and Jim Newman and Mike Massimino completing the job Tuesday.

The longest space walk, Wednesday, could last more than seven hours as astronauts work on replacing the failing Hubble electrical system with a new power control unit that will last until the telescope is decommissioned in 2010.

The final spacewalk on Thursday focuses on installing a new camera to increase tenfold the resolution of the telescope's images.

All told, Columbia is carrying $172 million in equipment to update the telescope. After performing the upgrades, the shuttle is scheduled to boost the Hubble to a higher orbit, giving it a longer life in space.

Mission managers decided not to abort the shuttle's repair mission to the Hubble shortly after takeoff early Friday despite problems in one of two redundant freon lines that cool the shuttle's equipment and the crew during reentry. *AFP*

NY nuke bomb scare kept secret—Time

NEW YORK—One month after the Sept. 11 terrorist onslaught on the United States, senior US officials were informed that terrorists had obtained a 10-kiloton nuclear bomb and were planning to smuggle it into New York, Time Magazine reported.

In its latest edition due out Monday (Tuesday in Manila), Time said the highly classified intelligence alert was circulated to only a few top US officials and was deliberately kept secret so as not to panic New Yorkers.

The intelligence report was based on information from a US agent codenamed "dragonfire," described as of "undetermined" reliability by intelligence officials, Time added.

However, the alert dovetailed with reports that nuclear devices had gone missing from the Russian arsenal during the 1990s, specifically a report from one Russian general who maintained that his forces were missing a 10-kiloton bomb, Time said.

A 10-kiloton bomb detonated in Lower Manhattan could kill some 100,000 civilians, contaminate 700,000 more with radiation and flatten everything within half-a-mile of the blast, the news weekly reported.

The intelligence alert was so secret that New York's mayor at the time Rudolph Giuliani said he was kept in the dark and top FBI officials were also out of the loop, according to Time.

An intensive investigation was launched, and when counterterrorism investigators turned up nothing, according to Time, they concluded that the information from "dragonfire" was false.

However, the alert drove home continued US vulnerability to terrorism despite increased security following Sept. 11.

"We are as vulnerable today as we were on 9/10 or 9/12," Karen Hughes, White House adviser to President George W. Bush, was quoted as saying. "We just know more." *AFP*

FEER magazine backs down, to send apology

BANGKOK—The Far Eastern Economic Review magazine of US publisher Dow Jones & Co said it would hand the Thai parliament an apology letter on Monday following a dispute over a story deemed offensive to the Thai monarchy.

The letter is the result of negotiations between lawyers for the magazine's reporters, whose visas were revoked last month, and senior local police officers over how the magazine could mitigate the damage caused by the article.

The Hong Kong-based magazine's Bangkok bureau chief, Shawn Crispin, 33, and correspondent Rodney Tasker, 56, both received letters last month informing them that their visas had been revoked on grounds they were a "threat" to national security.

Police have said the move to deport the journalists followed a story in the magazine's Jan. 10 edition on the relationship between Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra as well as about businesses run by Thaksin's family.

The Review's Jan. 10 issue was banned in Thailand and pulled from shelves.

The publication said in a statement that its lawyers would hand the president of the Thai parliament a letter later on Monday.

"It was never the intention of the Far Eastern Economic Review to write or generate any adverse commentary concerning Thailand's highest institution and if our issue on Jan. 10 has been so interpreted, we most sincerely apologize for it," the statement quoted the letter as saying.

The article in the banned edition commented on the king's birthday speech in early December in which the monarch said Thailand was facing a crisis. The king's speech was widely interpreted as being critical of the prime minister.

Thailand has tough laws which restrict what can be written or said about the royal family. The country also has little-used laws allowing restrictions on the publication of material seen as threatening Thai morals or national security.

The Review's sister daily newspaper, the Asian Wall Street Journal, said in its editorial on Monday that the report meant no disrespect to Thailand's royal family.

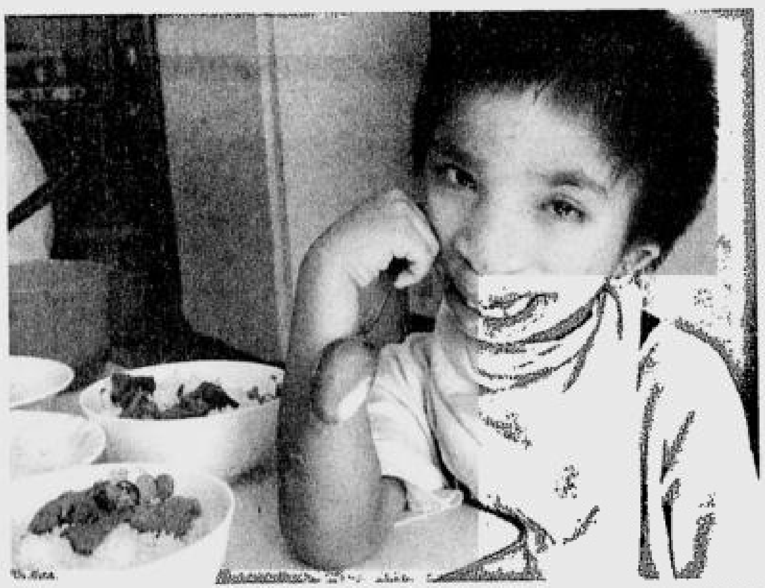
"The King commands our admiration as a symbol of Thai sovereignty and for his many good works and exemplary leadership of the Thai people," the newspaper said.

"To remove any doubts on that point, a letter from Review Editor Michael Vatikiotis will be delivered today to the president of the Thai National Assembly apologizing for causing 'any adverse commentary concerning Thailand's highest institution.'"

But the newspaper was highly critical of Thaksin, who it accused of picking a fight with foreign reporters "as a way to deflect attention from its own troubles."

"This is a familiar if dreary political tactic, used in Asia by the late Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos and Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad," it said.

Thaksin had "a thin skin and is quick to blame others, especially foreigners, for his own mistakes," it said, adding that the government's dealings with foreign investors had sent "foreign investment into a tailspin." *Reuters*



REUTERS

VIETNAM WAR CRUELTY

Agent Orange victim Tran Minh An, 5, waits for his lunch at the Tu Du Women's Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City in this Nov. 14, 2000 file photo, a few days before a visit to Vietnam by US President Bill Clinton. US and Vietnamese government scientists and international experts gathered in Hanoi on March 3 for a key meeting on the effects of the toxic Vietnam War defoliant Agent Orange.

Britain losing daily battle with muggers, killers, thieves

By Kate Kelland

LONDON—Britain once prided itself as the nation which gave the world its first official police force—putting "bobbies on the beat" to patrol the streets, keep order and help those in trouble.

Now police fight a daily battle with muggers, killers and thieves. It is a battle they are losing.

In a telling sign of how crime now rules, police have decided to scrap the traditional yellow placards once placed at the scene of a robbery or hit-and-run to appeal for witnesses.

Dotted all over the place, on street corners, at bus stops, in train stations, they were too obvious a sign of rising crime rates. They were scaring people.

And no wonder.

A huge rise in gangland shootings in the capital has prompted some London doctors to turn to Soweto, the crime-laden South African township, as a training ground for desperately-needed lessons in treating gunshot wounds.

Doctors at a hospital in Hackney, east London, say shootings in their inner city area have increased eight-fold in the past two years, from one a month to two a week.

The national picture is similarly bleak. Figures for 2000-01 show guns were used in more than 7,350 crimes across Britain—up eight percent on the previous 12-month period.

But gun crime barely tells half the story.

If Britain's crime story were made into a movie, its plot would stretch credibility to breaking point.

Some key scenes—a foiled diamond raid on the Millennium Dome which would have been the biggest heist in history; a massive $6.5-million robbery from under the noses of security guards at Heathrow, one of the world's busiest airports; the theft 24 hours later of 23,000 mobile phones from the same place.

The background—vicious and sometimes racist murders carried out by children on children; rival shootings by so-called "Yardie" drug gangs; trafficking of human beings; violent "carjackings" in which drivers are forced at knife- or gunpoint out of their vehicles.

All this in a land which produced Sir Robert Peel, the creator of the world's first police force in 1829, and which held dear the comforting image of the bobby bicycling through the streets, helping old ladies and gently scolding small children for throwing stones.

No longer. Figures from London's Scotland Yard police headquarters show that in the past year alone, street crime in the capital rose by 49 percent, making the streets far more dangerous than New York—once considered the most crime-ridden city in the world. *Reuters*

Across the NATION

Assistant Editor **Tony Bergonia**

War evacuees still refuse to go home

COTABATO CITY—Relief workers have started providing relief assistance and medical services to some 2,500 families displaced by recent skirmishes between government troopers and Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels in Maguindanao.

Bainon Karon, regional secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (DSWD-ARMM), said most of the refugees still refuse to return to their homes for fear that another fighting will send them back to the evacuation sites.

"They would rather stay on safe grounds than live in fear in their homes, especially when soldiers and rebels are still around," Karon told the INQUIRER.

Bai Sambay Suwaib, DSWD-ARMM administrative officer, said ready-to-eat food from the DSWD and rice assistance from the local government units have been distributed to some of the evacuees.

DSWD workers listed as evacuees some 1,510 families in Shariff Aguak town, 575 families in Datu Piang and 4,320 families from Mamasapano.

Both the military and the MILF leadership have separately claimed that normalcy has been restored in the conflict areas.

"The GRP-MILF ceasefire panel is now investigating the incident to determine who is at fault," Ghazali Jaafar, MILF vice chair for political affairs, told radio station dxMS.

"Hopefully we can prevent a similar incident in the future," he added.

Maj. Julieto Ando, speaking for the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said there has been no violent incident reported in the last 24 hours.

"We will maintain our defensive positions, but we will launch offensives should the need arise," he told the INQUIRER.

Ando said four rebels and a soldier have been killed in the fighting that started Wednesday last week.

But Jaafar said there was no reported casualty on the rebel side.

Fighting between soldiers and MILF guerrillas erupted after gunmen torched a bulldozer of the Maguindanao provincial government doing a road-concreting project in Shariff Aguak. Ando said the MILF was responsible for the attack.

Jaafar denied the charge, claiming an investigation should be conducted to determine "who did what."

Believing that the MILF was responsible and that the rebels were on the offensive, the Army launched air and ground assaults against MILF positions where the persons who burned the road equipment reportedly sought refuge.

Karon said other private relief agencies have also extended assistance to the evacuees housed in several public schools in the three affected towns.

"With a limited budget, we are trying to work within our means," Karon told the INQUIRER.

Health workers also reported minor ailments among children in the evacuation sites. ***Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Visayas will have rains and winds of not more than 60 KPH. coastal waters in these areas will be moderate to rough. Western Visayas and the Eastern section of Luzon and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers. source: **pagasa**

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy to Cloudy	HI32° Lo21°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy to Cloudy	HI 22° Lo12°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy	Hi 28° Lo18°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy to Cloudy	HI 32° Lo21°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy to Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo20°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy to Cloudy	HI 29° Lo18°
Legazpi	Cloudy	Hi 28° Lo23°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	HI 29° Lo19°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy to Cloudy	HI 31° Lo21°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy to Cloudy	HI 30° Lo26°
Cebu	Mostly Cloudy	HI 30° Lo23°
Tacloban	Cloudy	HI 30° Lo23°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy to Cloudy	HI 33° Lo24°
Zamboanga	Partly Clousy to Cloudy	HI 34° Lo25°
Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo20°
Davao	Mostly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo23°

Compiled by: Chona GAlang, PDI Research/03/05/02

ROUNDUP

Forest fires hit Benguet

MANKAYAN, Benguet—Forest fires hit at least 50 hectares of the Gadagad forest between Sapid and Cabiten villages here. Flor Fajilan, Lepanto Mines media representative, said the fires raged for at least three days and slowly encroached into three mountains near the mines. The mountains are part of the town's watershed, he said. Fajilan said trenches have been dug as firebreaks to stop the spread of the fires. He said they believed that the fires were started intentionally as upland farmers use the town's mountains for slash-and-burn farming.

Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Missing lanterns

BAGUIO CITY—The city government lost at least P16,000 after eight sunflower lanterns, put up all over the city as part of the Baguio Flower Festival decorations, were reported missing last week. An inventory by the city engineer's office showed that eight lanterns, costing P2,000 each and at least four feet high, were stolen two days before the festival opened on Feb. 23. Romeo Concio, general services officer of the city government, said the city spent at least P300,000 for 150 sunflower lanterns.

Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Street humps regulated

LUCENA CITY—The city government has regulated the construction of concrete humps on city streets. City engineer Amaury Polintan Jr. said the uncontrolled construction of humps has been the subject of complaints of many motorists. Instead of just slowing down vehicular flow, especially inside subdivisions, motorists have to make a full stop before going over the poorly designed road obstacles. Polintan said people who plan to build humps should secure a clearance from the city engineer's office. ***Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Cop killer nabbed

CANDELARIA, Quezon—Police here arrested on Friday the primary suspect in the killing of a policeman and the wounding of another. Rodilio Ancheta resisted by firing a .45 cal. pistol but the arresting team beat him to the draw and shot him in different parts of the body. Ancheta allegedly killed SPO1 Paul Gilbert Dimaandal on Feb. 26 at the Lover Bee Videoke Bar here. The suspect is now confined at the Quezon Memorial Hospital.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Firm exec robbed

LUCENA CITY—An executive of an agro-industrial firm lost P105,568 in cash to unidentified robbers on Thursday while he was travelling alone in Barangay Puri, San Antonio, Quezon. Police said the victim, Joel Mojares, 30, assistant supervisor of Buenas Agro Industrial and Services in San Pablo City, was aboard his jeep when he was flagged down by at least four men aboard a Tamaraw FX. When the victim stopped, one of the robbers pistol-whipped him in the face. The robbers fled toward Tiaong, Quezon. ***Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

New pact with ex-NPAs to ban display of guns

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) has been granted 100 special gun permits but its members are not allowed to display their firearms publicly.

This was among the provisions stipulated in amendments proposed to the peace agreement signed between the government and the Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa-Pilipinas (RPM-P), the RPA-ABB's political arm, in December 2000.

Of the 100 special gun permits, 35 were given to RPA-ABB members assigned in Negros Occidental, 21 on Panay Island, and 20 in Central Visayas. The rest were given to members operating in Davao, Maguindanao, Agusan, Nueva Ecija, Compostela, Lanao, Metro Manila, Ilocos region and its national staff.

RPM-P chair Arturo Tabara told a news conference on Saturday that the issuance of the special permit is governed by existing laws, rules, regulations and procedures.

As stated in the clarificatory document, the firearms will not be publicly displayed, except in the exercise of authorized and properly supervised police or military operations related to peace and order or law enforcement.

The carrying and display of high-powered firearms by the RPA-ABB during its founding anniversary in Salvador Benedicto town last year created an uproar among local government chief executives, militant groups and peace advocates.

Tabara said the assistance being extended by the RPM-P/RPA-ABB leaders and members in the maintenance of peace and order was stipulated in Article 2 of the peace agreement.

This assistance, which included helping the police in the arrest of wanted persons, was part of confidence-building measures.

Several sectors alleged that the RPA-ABB rebels were being used by the military in its campaign against the New People's Army, not only in Negros Occidental but in other areas of the country as well.

RPA-ABB national commander Carapali Lualhati described the issue as "recycled propaganda." He added that the complaint was not the concern of civilians but members of the National Democratic Front.

Tabara also urged the creation of local monitoring teams by civil society groups to assist the five-man Joint Enforcement and Monitoring Committee to ensure compliance with the provisions of the agreement.

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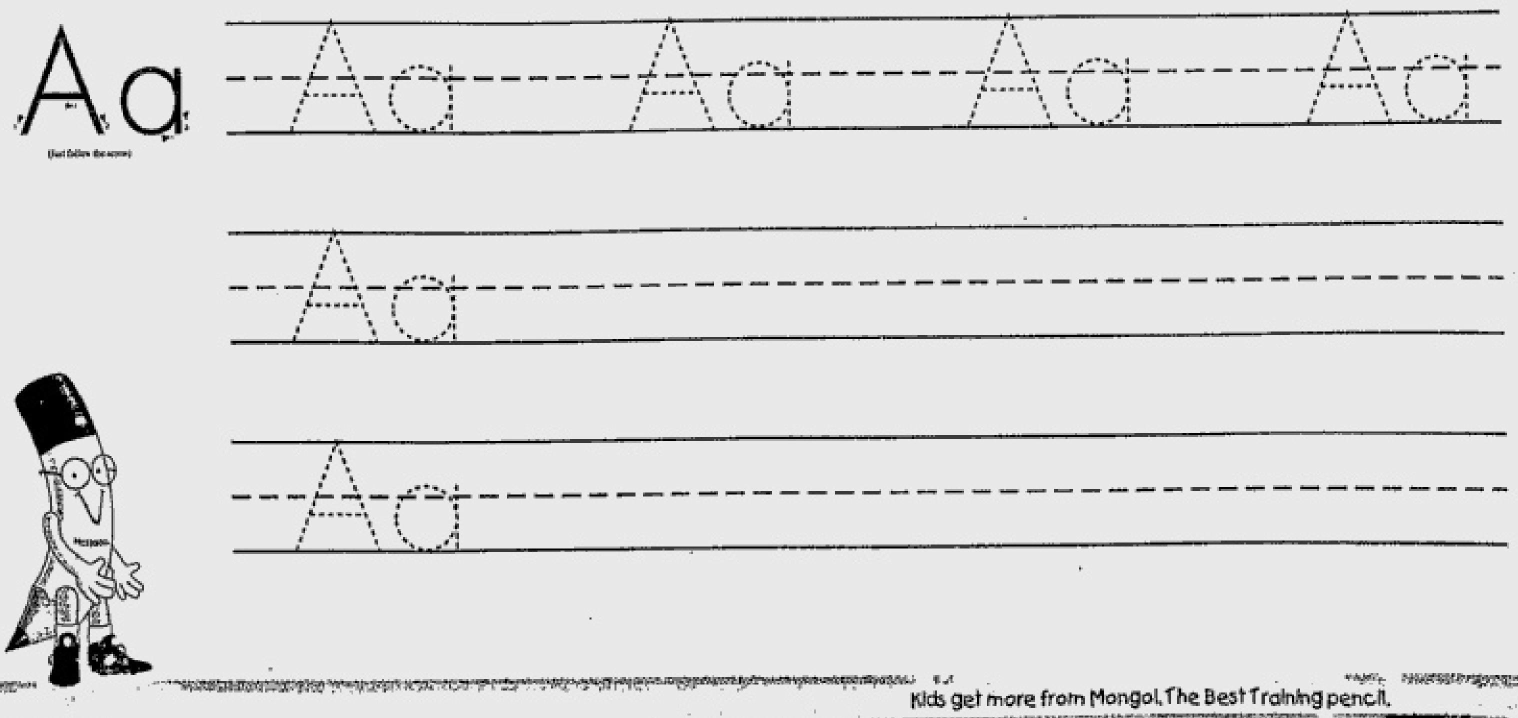

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Iloilo solon says Erap buying time for 2004

BACOLOD CITY—A former House prosecutor in the aborted impeachment trial has expressed the belief that deposed President Joseph Estrada was just buying time to avoid conviction when he fired all his lawyers.

Deputy Speaker for the Visayas Raul Gonzalez said Estrada was actually waiting for a new administration in 2004 that will be more sympathetic to him.

He added that the former president's main agenda was to play on the people's emotions when Estrada lamented that he had lost hope in getting justice at the Sandiganbayan.

If he were the one presiding over Estrada's cases, Gonzalez said he would call his bluff by appointing a counsel for him.

"That is one way of throwing back the bluff at Estrada," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez and the members of the House committee on constitutional amendments were in Bacolod to conduct public hearings.

Rep. Antonio Eduardo Nachura, also a former House prosecutor, said he agreed that Estrada's move to fire his lawyers was just a ploy to delay his trial and to win the people's sympathy.

"Estrada would like to be pictured as someone who is oppressed by an arbitrary government," said Nachura, also a member of the House committee on constitutional amendments.

"He wants to bring the case out of the Sandiganbayan and into the bar of public opinion," he said.

In Tacloban City, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez described Estrada's move as an attempt to condition the minds of the people, particularly his followers, that he will not obtain justice under the Macapagal administration.

"It is a classic attempt to poison the minds of the people especially his political supporters that he is not being afforded justice," he said. "That is not true. He is being afforded justice."

Perez said the decision of the former president was aimed at delaying the hearing of his plunder case before the Sandiganbayan.

"(Estrada) is hounded with the fact or knowledge that we could prove all the allegations and he knows that all of the charges against him will work for us and we have all the evidence," he told reporters at the Daniel Z. Romualdez Airport. Perez was on his way to Dulag, Leyte, to attend a graduation rite.

"If I were the accused and I know that I'm guilty and I know that the evidence against me is strong, what will I do? I will try to delay the proceeding," he added.

In Iloilo City, militant groups, who were among those at the forefront of the anti-Estrada protests here last year, warned that Estrada would not run out of excuses and "gimmicks to evade the historic verdict of the people."

"Estrada's performances are getting cornier and more and more revolting," said Jeffrey Celiz, chair of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan in Panay. ***Carla P. Gomez, Joey A. Gabieta and Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau***

Apathy stalls Iloilo bid to revive old buildings

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY-The preservation of the central business district here is stalled by the absence of building owners and lack of interest by the tenants to assist in cataloging the buildings in the area.

Lawyer Jose Junio Jacela said building owners are staying in Manila and abroad, leaving the care of the buildings to tenants.

The tenants, on the other hand, are reluctant to provide information to the Iloilo City Cultural Heritage Conservation Council (ICCCHCC) either because they do not know the structures' history or they do not have the consent of the building owners.

Architect Manuel Tingson, also of the ICCHCC, said at least half of the 25 building owners in the city are no longer living in Iloilo. He said the council is trying to locate them to enlist their cooperation.

The city government recently invited building owners, artists and architects to a cocktail party at Villa Arevalo to solicit support for the project.

The ICCHCC is currently cataloging at least 25 buildings along JM Basa Street, the old Calle Real. The documentation lays the groundwork for the conservation and enhancement of heritage buildings in the downtown area, which was identified as one of the city's heritage zones.

The cataloguing delves into the building's history, its owners and the identification of architectural details and influences. It is part of the project to revitalize Iloilo City's central business district.

A heritage or legacy building should be at least 50 years old or more.

Jacela, a former city councilor, said Calle Real should be preserved because "the old buildings mirror the cultural influences on Iloilo through time."

Jacela, who sits as ICCHCC chair, authored Ordinance No. 54 in April 2000 providing for the restoration and revival of the old central business district to be called Iloilo's heritage zone.

In May 2001, before his term as councilor ended, Jacela also authored an ordinance that provides for tax holidays to businesses that will relocate along Calle Real.

Under the ordinance, a new business gets a one-year exemption from business taxes for every 10 years of doing business in the area.

For those putting up new businesses with at least P25 million in capital, they get a 25-percent tax discount for every P1 million invested every year.

Building owners who restore, reconstruct or preserve heritage buildings are exempted from paying building fees and, for two years, from paying business taxes as lessor.

Jacela's ordinance also prohibits the issuance of repair or construction permits within the heritage zone without the approval of the ICCHCC.

If repairs are necessary, the façade showing the building's architectural design should be retained.

Calle Real is known as the Escolta of Iloilo. In the 19th century, it was the liveliest place in the city until the 1980s, before the rise of air-conditioned malls.

VAL HANDUMON

WEAPONS SKILLS
US soldiers, like Sgt. 1st Class Brendan Ramroth, get to fire their guns not only at imaginary targets during their war games with Philippine soldiers, but also during a gun competition sponsored by Basilan officials.

Grenade blasts lead to escape of 6 inmates

ISULAN, Sultan Kudarat—Police here have launched a province-wide manhunt against five of six prisoners who bolted the provincial jail Sunday afternoon.

Supt. Abubakar Mangelen, Sultan Kudarat police director, said the prisoners, facing murder and car theft charges, escaped at about 2:30 p.m., after two inmates tossed hand grenades at the jail's guardhouse.

No one was injured in the blasts but Mangelen said the confusion it sowed gave an opportunity to the other inmates to walk out of their cells.

However, Mangelen also said he was surprised at the seemingly lax security at the jail.

Provincial warden Mike Ampuyod was not around when the escape occurred.

"It's surprising that only three guards were manning the main gate of the densely populated prison compound," Supt. Mangelen told the INQUIRER.

At least 300 prisoners are crammed inside the provincial jail, which is near the provincial capitol building.

Mangelen said one of the escapees was recaptured shortly after the escape, but Guianudin Sultan, Anatoli Acob, Guinaid Buat, Edwin Duma Sapalon and Abdul Torres, eluded capture.

He said based on initial investigation, Sapalon and Buat hatched the escape plan.

"Only two inmates have hatched the escape (plan) but when (the) other inmates saw the opportunity, they grabbed it," Mangelen told radio station dxMS.

He said the police were also trying to find out how the two inmates got the grenades.

But Mangelen said it was apparent that poor amenities, aggravated by laxity on the part of the guards, contributed to the jailbreak.

Sultan Kudarat Gov. Pax Mangudadatu said "heads will roll" after the escape, which he described as "a very avoidable circumstance." ***Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Army officer angered by cops' release of guerrilla accused of string of crimes

LUPON, Davao Oriental—The commanding officer of the Army's 8th Special Forces Battalion based in Mati town was furious after learning that the police released a suspected New People's Army leader without prior coordination with the Army.

Maj. Alexis Gopico said he could not believe that the police would release Ruben Tanoy, 34, the alleged leader of the NPA's Front Committee 18.

Tanoy was arrested by the military on Feb. 16, along with Rico Baliguat, another suspected rebel, at a safehouse in Sitio Colombongan in Barangay Kokornon here.

The military accused Tanoy of leading last year's series of killings in the province, including those of policemen and militiamen in neighboring San Isidro town.

The military also alleged that Tanoy was responsible for the series of bus burnings and robberies in the province.

"We were shocked about his (Tanoy's) release from jail. We did not know why he was released because the police did not inform us. Besides, it was the police's task to file appropriate charges against this NPA leader. He is a prize catch, you know, because he was behind various criminal activities in the province. I am now tasking Capt. Marion Candava to look into this case. We could not allow this thing to happen," a fuming Gopico said.

Insp. Antonio Rivera, Lupon police chief, defended his decision to free Tanoy.

He said during tactical interrogation, "it turned out that it was Rico Baliguat, not Ruben Tanoy, who is the commander of the NPA's Front Committee 18."

But Gopico insisted that Tanoy is a ranking NPA leader.

"We are the ones who arrested the two NPA rebels, not the police, so we know the whole story. The police did not even bother to call us (to inform us) that they are going to free the rebel leader. We only heard about it," he said.

Rivera said Baliguat remains in jail because of charges of illegal possession of firearms.

But he said Tanoy could not be held "because the anti-subversion law was already repealed." ***Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Cultists refuse anti-polio vaccines, spoil DOH program

DAVAO CITY—Cultists in the Island Garden City of Samal (Igacos) in Davao del Norte are spoiling the 100-percent target set by the health department for its nationwide anti-polio program.

Dolores Castillo, Southern Mindanao regional health director, said the refusal of members of the 12 Ka Panon and Diyos Amahan cults to have their children vaccinated could even end up in a polio epidemic.

Castillo said they already sought the help of local government officials, but members of the cult continuously reject the administration of the vaccines on their children.

"We can't force them to do anything, we have to respect their religious beliefs," she said.

The Department of Health estimates that more than 40 children below five years old could not receive the vaccines because of the refusal of their parents.

This would be enough to trigger an outbreak in the future that could strike off the Philippines from the list of polio-free countries.

Aside from Samal Island, some residents of Marilog District here also turned their children away from the Balik-Patak, saying the administration of the vaccine is not allowed by their religion.

Igacos Mayor Rogelio Antalan said there are at least 25 religious sects in his area that believe that only God has the right to cure or prevent diseases.

"What can you do? We can't force them because that is their religion," he said.

However, Antalan said they would continue to exhaust all means to convince members of the cults on the importance of polio vaccination and the implications of their refusal to have them administered to their children.

Aside from religious belief, Castillo said that health workers found it difficult to reach far-flung barangays. To remedy the problem, she said the health department has trained local residents to help in the campaign. ***Joel B. Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Irrigators ask Gloria to stop rice importation

NAGA CITY—The National Confederation of Irrigators Associations (NCIA), the organization of all irrigators in the country, Friday petitioned President Macapagal-Arroyo to stop rice importation and instead focus on a genuine rice sufficiency program.

Silvestre Bonto, NCIA spokesperson, said his group wants Ms Macapagal to abolish the National Food Authority, scrap the privatization of rice importation and veto bills in Congress seeking to remove the volume of rice that may be imported.

He said the 400,000-member NCIA rejects the passage of House Bill 3339 and Senate Bill 1912, which would open the floodgates to unrestricted private importation of rice.

The passage of the bills would spell doom for the local rice industry, he said.

"A Filipino farmer spends P7.45 to produce a kilo of rice which is already equivalent to the price that exporting countries like Thailand and Vietnam are selling," he said.

The governments in those countries give ample subsidies to their rice farmers, he said.

Filipino farmers also suffered from the rampant smuggling of rice that has further pushed down the farm gate prices of palay to between P7.50 and P8 a kilo.

Last year's farm gate price was at its lowest at P5.75 to P7 a kilo.

The NCIA is proposing an increase in the subsidy to farmers by pegging the support price to P15 per kilo from the existing P9.50. ***Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Malaysia sends to RP cop wanted for rape, theft

OLONGAPO CITY—A fugitive former policeman, who was extradited by the Malaysian police on Saturday, has been detained at the city jail since Sunday to face criminal charges here, a police official said.

Noel Cueco, 39, was handed over to police operatives at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Saturday night, according to Senior Supt. Orlando Madella, Olongapo police chief.

Madella said Cueco, a resident of Olongapo, was arrested in Northern Penang state for entering Malaysia with a fake passport.

Cueco was allegedly involved in six fraud cases worth $131,580 in Malaysia, reports turned over to Madella by the Malaysian criminal investigation department showed.

Aside from rape and theft cases in Olongapo, Cueco has also pending murder cases filed by the family of a barangay captain in Naic, Cavite, Madella said.

The most prominent figure Malaysia extradited to the Philippines recently was Nur Misuari, former chair of the Moro National Liberation Front who is now also in jail for rebellion. ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Pangasinan town picks up pieces after massive fish kill

By Yolanda Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—The town of Bolinao tries to pick up the pieces after a massive fish kill last month brought its aquaculture industry down on its knees.

Bolinao Mayor Jesus Celeste has stopped all aquaculture operations in the town until the needed amendments to the municipal fishery ordinance are put in place.

Celeste issued an executive order last week providing the implementing guidelines of the municipal council's resolution declaring "a moratorium on the operation of fish pens and cages where *bangus* (milkfish) are cultured.

Celeste also created "Task Force Aquaman" which will recommend "effective and efficient (measures to regulate) all coastal marine activities and strict implementation of the municipal fishery ordinance."

The executive order banned the re-stocking of empty fishery structures and called for the transfer of empty fish cages to the Mayongen Cave, pending the determination of the carrying capacity of the designated aquaculture structures.

All empty cages in areas not designated for aquaculture activities will be immediately removed and these areas will be declared restricted to new units, the order said.

Fish cages and pens with stocks that survived the fish kill are allowed to operate until the stocks are harvested.

"All activities such as replacement and repositioning of cages with stocks, repair, upgrade and relocation of units, must first be secured with needed clearance from the municipal mayor," Celeste said in his order.

In a letter to Celeste, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Director Malcolm Sarmiento Jr. proposed five measures to avoid the occurrence of fish kill in the town.

The measures include regulating the operation of fish pens and cages by limiting the number of structures to only 480, removing illegally constructed sea cages, and limiting the cages to five for each operator.

It was learned that most operators of fish pens and cages here own more than 10 cages each. Some operators own up to 50 cages.

The other measures proposed by the BFAR are:

o Declaring Bolinao a marine culture zone and developing a management plan for sea cages establishment, operation and maintenance; and imposition of penalties on delinquent and illegal operators.

o Assigning the BFAR to take the lead in coordinating with financing institutions to help the local government package new livelihood projects to avail of credit assistance.

o Asking the local government to strictly adhere to the Code of Practice for Aquaculture.

o Asking the BFAR and University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute to encourage the local government and stakeholders to strictly adopt the zoning plan of the Lingayen Gulf.

Sequestered assets total ₱223B–PCGG

By Donna S. Cueto

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government has finished the valuation of all its sequestered assets over the past 16 years, and said that these have reached P223 billion.

The assets were covered by the 24 civil cases filed by the PCGG, all pending with the Sandiganbayan.

The amount could only be recovered upon a favorable resolution of the court cases. The list does not include Civil Case No. 0141, which covers the $660 million in Marcos Swiss deposits now in an escrow account.

The biggest valuation belonged to assets—shares of stock and real estate assets—tied up with Civil Case No. 33 filed against Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco. The shares of stock are valued at P96.8 billion and the real estate assets P2.1 billion, according to the PCGG report that PCGG Chair Haydee Yorac released recently.

Among these are the equity shares in 155 corporations, including San Miguel Corp., 14 Coconut Industry Investment Fund companies, oil mills, and the United Coconut Planters' Bank and its subsidiaries.

The main Marcos case, Civil Case No. 0002, has a listed valuation of P26.76 billion worth of assets. These include the P26.36 billion in shares of stock in 28 firms, and P400 million in real estate assets. Among these sequestered real estate assets are the Batac Guest House, the Batac Museum, condominium units in Galeria de Magallanes and Legaspi Towers, the Olot rest house in Leyte, the Sto. Niño Shrine, the Presidential Guest House in La Union, the Coconut Palace, the Vigan House, and various lots in Parañaque City and Baguio City.

The sequestered assets subject in Civil Case No. 034 the PCGG filed against Benjamin Romualdez were even worth much more than the Marcos assets under Civil Case No. 0002. The Benjamin Romualdez assets were valued at P29.9 billion—P25.56 billion in shares of stock, P4.33 billion in real estate property, and P13 million worth of aircraft.

The value of sequestered assets covered in Civil Case No. 0005 filed against Lucio Tan was the third biggest at P24.9 billion, followed by assets worth P11.4 billion under Civil Case No. 0008 filed against Bienvenido and Gliceria Tantoco.

The following are the valuation of sequestered assets under the other civil cases filed against Marcos cronies: P7.7 billion for the assets in the Civil Case No. 003 under former Marcos Energy Minister Geronimo Velasco; P196 million for assets connected with the case against Andres V. Genito; P276 million for assets connected with Roman Cruz Jr.; P1.55 billion for assets connected with Fe Roa Gimenez; P7.48 billion for assets connected with Jose Africa and Manuel Nieto; P940 million for assets connected with Alfredo Romualdez; P353 million for assets connected with Ricardo Silverio; P1.3 billion for assets connected with Modesto Enriquez; P1.02 billion for assets connected with Rodolfo Cuenca; P377 million for assets connected with the late Fabian Ver; P47 million for assets connected with Armando Romualdez; P172 million for assets connected with Edward Marcelo; P1.53 billion for assets connected with Emilio Yap; P117.7 million for assets connected with Luz Bakunawa; P5.52 billion for assets connected with Peter Sabido; P451 million for assets connected with Maximo Argana; P66 million for assets connected with Vicente Chuidian; and P364 million for assets connected with Alfonso Lim.

The valuation of the sequestered assets since 1986 was one of the projects Yorac had wanted to finish this year.

157 Marcos paintings worth 'millions of dollars' missing

By Donna S. Cueto

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government said it hoped to get "millions of dollars" from the sale of the 157 paintings, mostly masterpieces from the Marcos collection, believed to be in the United States.

PCGG Chair Haydee Yorac said the commission had already reported the paintings to the Art Loss Registry in New York, which would notify the PCGG if it got word on the whereabouts of the masterpieces.

"These would be worth millions of dollars," Yorac said in a previous interview referring to the paintings.

But the lead counsel of the 10,000 human rights victims said he also planned to go after the paintings if ever these were recovered in the United States.

Robert Swift said he would file a claim on these paintings for the human rights victims.

Swift and the PCGG, through its American lawyer, had divided proceeds of the Picasso painting "Head of a Woman" last year in accordance with the direction of a US court.

Christie's auctioned off the painting in New York for about $900,000. Swift deposited the $450,000 with the court of US District Judge Manuel Real for the human rights victims.

The PCGG reported that it had acquired close to $400,000 in cash or more than P21 million, representing half of the proceeds of the Picasso painting.

But Swift said the PCGG got $450,000 from the sale but reported a lower amount probably because it had paid the accumulated fees of its lawyer in the United States, Jeffrey Greenbaum.

A PCGG accomplishment report, released on its 16th anniversary on Feb. 28, said the net amount received from the sale of the Picasso painting in New York on May 13, 1999 was $398,123.81.

The PCGG got the money after Oct. 16, 2001 when US District Court Judge Robert Patterson of the Southern District of New York rendered a final judgment on a suit the Philippine government filed against Christie's in 1998.

Swift and Greenbaum signed last year a stipulation of dismissal in which the "complaint (of the PCGG) and the interpleader counterclaim" against Christie's would be dismissed, and the proceeds of the Picasso painting "divided" between the human rights victims and the PCGG.

Swift said he was made to understand by the PCGG representative that the 50-50 arrangement between the human rights class plaintiffs and the PCGG would not set a precedent for other Marcos wealth.

Neither the human rights plaintiffs nor the PCGG "found" the Picasso painting—one of around 160 missing masterpieces from the Marcoses' collection. It was the Art Loss Registry that sounded off the PCGG about the missing painting.

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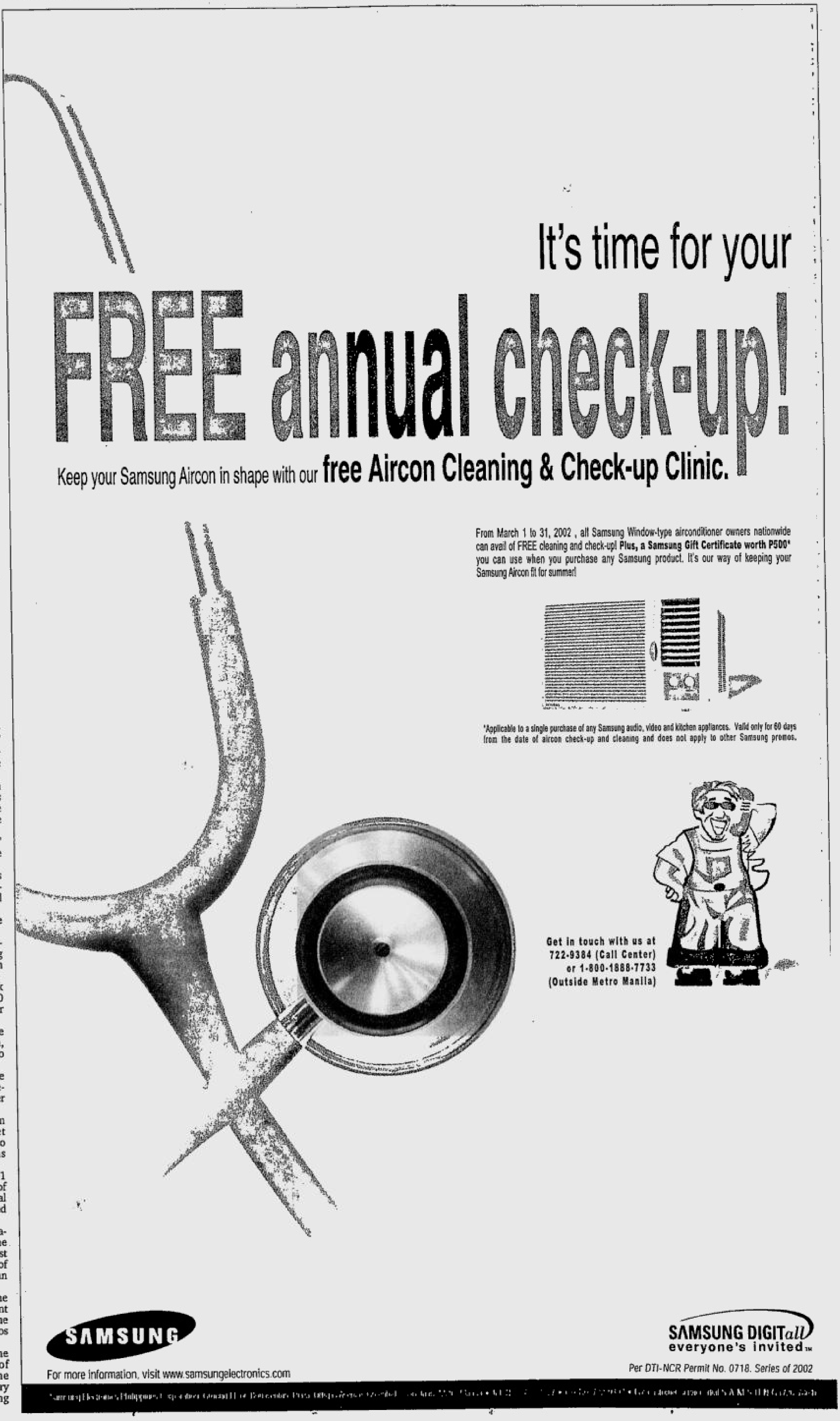

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Sandigan warns Erap of contempt

From page A1

"There will be something coming once the prosecution has filed (a motion initiating contempt proceedings). Many points will be raised in the resolution that will be issued," he told court reporters in a mix of English and Filipino.

But a veteran lawyer who has written influential textbooks on evidence, former Senate President Jovito Salonga, said Estrada's "repeated assaults" on the special division and the Supreme Court which created it were "baseless and unfair." ***(See accompanying story.)***

Criminal cases

When told of Bocar's statements, former Estrada lawyer Raymond Fortun merely said, "We'll see, we'll see."

Fortun dared the prosecution to cite specific contemptuous comments, "for if their ground will be based on sub judice statements, we might initiate the same proceedings against them for similar violations."

He cited the legal principle of "pari delicto." "They must come to court with clean hands," he told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Now a spokesperson for his ex-client, Fortun clarified his role: "On my part, I'm merely relaying and interpreting what my client has already been stating in the media."

In media interviews and at various forums since last week, Estrada and his erstwhile lawyers accused the Sandiganbayan and the Supreme Court of bias in their handling of the ex-President's four criminal cases.

Their complaints stem from the high court's creation of the Sandiganbayan's special division in January, the anti-graft court's order to hold hearings thrice a week, and the high tribunal's recent denial of the motion for bail of former San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, Estrada's co-accused son.

Only last Friday, Fortun found himself apologizing to the court for a remark he made over the radio. Associate Justice Teresita de Castro, a member of the special division, said she had heard Fortun say: "May those justices be struck by lightning."

"Whether you are inside or outside the court, you should exercise restraint as a member of the bar," De Castro told Fortun, who apologized.

That same day, Desierto had already threatened in open court to initiate contempt proceedings against the Estrada camp. The justices told him to file a formal manifestation if he wanted to pursue the matter.

Yesterday, an anti-crime group said it would ask the Integrated Bar of the Philippines to investigate the nine lawyers of former President Estrada who withdrew from his plunder case last week.

The Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption accused Estrada's lawyers of "conspiring to make a mockery of our justice system and creating a crisis situation and possible rebellion."

In a phone interview, VACC chair Dante Jimenez said the former President's lawyers have a "moral duty" to continue with their case and, if they resign, to help their successor lawyers.

Direct contempt

Courts can cite parties for direct contempt if the offensive remarks were uttered inside the courtroom, Bocar explained. In cases of indirect contempt, where the remarks are made outside the courtroom, or through the media, the court cannot act unless there is a complaint.

Indirect contempt is penalized with a fine not exceeding P30,000 or a jail term not exceeding six months, or both.

Bocar admitted that the Sandiganbayan allowed the accused to conduct media interviews, but only on certain conditions: that Estrada and his lawyers do not discuss the merits of their cases or give statements that tend to destroy the public's confidence in the justice system.

He said it was not only Estrada and his counsel who could be held liable but also the media organizations that aired or published the prohibited statements.

Bocar took note of the "beating" the Sandiganbayan had absorbed in the media because of the Estrada camp's comments.

"We look pitiful. We are beaten black and blue and we don't even do anything," he said in Filipino.

Bocar said this was the first time the Sandiganbayan had been subjected to intense attack. He rued the passing of those days when lawyers refrained from issuing contemptuous statements "not merely out of fear (of) but out of respect" for the justices.

"The attitude of the court is actually enough to rebut (Estrada's allegations). The justices have been very, very careful so as to avoid drawing such criticisms," he added. ***With a report from Jerome Aning***

Erap sees death; Palace says it's all drama

From page A1

Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson said Estrada was acting from a "script" to get his way with the Sandiganbayan.

Rigoberto Tiglao said Estrada was already in "Act III," wherein Estrada would embark on a fast that his supporters would portray as a hunger strike.

"But he's having second thoughts," Tiglao told reporters. "*Medyo mahirap siyang hindi kumain* (It's quite hard for him to miss meals)."

According to Tiglao, "Act I" of the purported script involved Estrada's complaints about eye and knee problems, and "Act II," his dismissal of his lawyers and refusal to face the Sandiganbayan, which he has accused of bias.

Tiglao claimed to have heard "reports" that the alleged script was made by Estrada's brother, film producer Jesse Ejercito.

'Connivance'

In his letter, Estrada reiterated his accusations that "from the outset, the Arroyo administration and several members of the Supreme Court have criminally connived to deny justice to me."

"You saw how (Chief) Justice (Hilario) Davide turned a blind eye to an affront on the sanctity of the impeachment proceedings by failing (or is it refusing?) to cite the private prosecutors who walked out in contempt of (the impeachment) court," he said.

"Davide was caught on camera saying that he was swearing in Gloria Arroyo as 'acting President,' but, I have been informed, actively and tearfully influenced his co-justices to give a '13-0' vote on the legitimacy of Macapagal's presidency," Estrada added.

He said the 13-0 decision not only violated the rules of succession for the presidency under the Constitution but "also violated the Court's own rules on the proper appreciation of double and triple hearsay."

He said the tribunal's subsequent denial of his petition to declare the Plunder Law unconstitutional, the creation of the special division of the Sandiganbayan "when my lawyers did not even ask for it," and the denial of his co-accused son Jinggoy's bail petition "convinced me that justice due me will be given to me only in the next life."

Estrada said that under normal circumstances, he would have accepted Sigfrid Fortun's services.

"However, these are not normal times, and it is my firm belief that neither you nor Raymond nor any other lawyer of equal brilliance and stature in the legal community could save me from my inevitable death, a future which has already been written for me by the present administration in connivance with the Supreme Court."

The Sandiganbayan special division accepted on Friday the mass withdrawal of Estrada's defense team and appointed six lawyers to serve as de officio counsel.

Of the six, four are from the Public Attorneys Office, and two, including Sigrid Fortun, from the Integrated Bar of the Philippines.

The court also gave Estrada two weeks to consider hiring a new set of private lawyers.

Throwback

Estrada's "act" has failed to move the President to intercede in his case, Tiglao said.

He said calls for Ms Macapagal to intercede for Estrada was a throwback to the martial law days when President Ferdinand Marcos controlled the three branches of government.

"We have to evolve (and realize) that the President doesn't interfere in the judiciary," Tiglao said. "Apparently, this case shows we haven't moved out of the martial law era. We have to mature as Filipinos and respect the rule of law."

"If the Sandiganbayan capitulates, we can forget the rule of law," he added.

Ms Macapagal has maintained that Estrada's request to be allowed to seek medical treatment abroad was entirely up to the Sandiganbayan.

She said that while she was saddened that Estrada had declared loss of faith in the judicial system, "the wheels of justice will just continue rolling."

Public defenders defended

JUSTICE Secretary Hernando Perez defended the assignment of four lawyers from the Public Attorneys Office (PAO) as Estrada's new counsel.

Perez said it was not the Department of Justice, which has direct supervision over PAO, which appointed the four as lawyers for Estrada.

"If the court appoints them as counsel de oficio, they cannot refuse. (They were appointed) not because they asked for it; it's because the court appointed them as counsel de officio," he said.

"Even private lawyers (can be appointed as counsel de officio). When I was a private lawyer I appeared as counsel de officio many times in cases that I (didn't) even like to handle," he said.

Perez did say he had reservations about the appointment.

"But if they will ask me, (PAO should not have been ordered to appear for Estrada). PAO lawyers (should be assigned) to poor people."

Estrada forces mobilize to mark May 1 mayhem

From page A1

not planning to launch "seditious acts," he said.

Obina's avowal notwithstanding, Aglipay is not taking chances and has ordered close monitoring of PMAP activities for security reasons.

"While the reported mobilization (for another uprising) is just a creation of the imagination, the NCRPO will address this concern so we can nip it in the bud," Aglipay said.

A little-known group professing loyalty to Joseph Estrada said that it was ready to mobilize its forces "when needed," and that its members would take the deposed President's fight to the streets at the "proper time."

In a statement, the Union of Masses for Democracy and Justice (UMDJ) lashed out at what it called the "kangaroo trial of the century," and heaped scorn on, among others, the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin and the Supreme Court.

UMDJ spokesperson Ver Eustaquio refused to divulge his group's plans for mass action, but said "no amount of spying and harassment by the military can prevent an impending storm."

"There are no rallies being planned yet, but our chapters are ready if ever they are needed," Eustaquio said at a press forum yesterday in Quezon City. "For sure we will go to the streets. But it will be unlike the May 1 (assault on Malacañang). Everything will be legal and non-violent."

Color of money

Estrada's camp has promised urban poor dwellers P500 each to join its rallies but they are not biting until they see the color of the money, according to presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao.

"That's one of the reports we got—that there's been some disappointment because there is no money forthcoming," Tiglao said. "This shows that their main attraction is money."

He did not say where Malacañang got the reports.

"We have our sources," he said. "We label them as intelligence reports, rumors, or actual reports from the other side. It's up to the media to check them."

Tiglao said Malacañang was confident that Estrada's camp would not be able to mobilize enough warm bodies for its rallies.

"We don't think the urban poor will fall prey again" to being used for political purposes, he said. "Our people are realizing they can't be used in political games anymore."

Tiglao also said Estrada's "slip" last week in a TV interview, wherein he admitted having signed bank documents as "Jose Velarde," had led people to doubt his credibility.

Malacañang continued to scoff at the claims of Estrada's camp that there would be another uprising unless the deposed leader was allowed to go abroad.

"We don't think it's any threat at all," Tiglao said. "We are confident that our people have matured after Edsa I and Edsa II."

'On the spot'

The pro-Estrada UMDJ said the ousted President's decision last week to dismiss his lawyers "has placed the entire judicial system on the spot."

"Right now, Estrada is no longer the one on trial," it said. "The country's justice system is on trial."

Eustaquio said the UMDJ was established in July 2001, had 25 member-organizations nationwide, and held office at the RE Building on Quezon Avenue.

Other UMDJ officials—secretary general Ed de Guzman, Boy Bonifacio and Arlene Paningasan, all veteran leaders of pro-Estrada mass actions—were present at the forum.

But at Camp Aguinaldo, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes downplayed reports that Estrada supporters were moving to destabilize the government.

"I don't see any threat here. There is no need for us to be overly excited," Reyes said in a teleconference with defense reporters. "I don't think we have a scenario here that would be like May 1."

Reyes justified the monitoring of PMAP activities, saying it was prompted by the threat of the group to launch protest actions.

Chief Supt. Crescencio Maralit, spokesperson of the Philippine National Police, also said the monitoring was being conducted "so we can adjust security procedures" in the event of a massive protest rally.

"We can't let anarchy reign in the streets," he said in a radio interview. "We should preempt this kind of action."

Maralit also belittled the PMAP's capability to mobilize forces, saying: "I don't think they have the capability to launch something similar to the May 1 attack."

Aglipay said Metro Manila police were prepared to contain any protest rally by the PMAP, with his office able to field 1,700 men "at any given time."

Aglipay said PMAP leader Ronald Lumbao, who is still at large after having allegedly incited Estrada loyalists to mount the attack on Malacañang, "to surrender to the bar of justice so that he can answer the accusations against him."

Lumbao is accused of rebellion before a Manila court. A warrant for his arrest was issued late last year.

People power

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said any attempt at people power at this time was bound to fail.

"People power cannot succeed without extensive and decisive support from the military and police," he said. "This was proven by People Power I and II when people in the streets and the military acted collaboratively to withdraw support from the administration."

Biazon noted that during the term of President Corazon Aquino, a significant segment of the military mounted at least seven coup attempts to try to effect a change in the national leadership.

But these attempts failed because of lack of support from the people, he pointed out.

On the other hand, Biazon said, the so-called "Edsa Tres" also failed despite the significant number of people in the streets calling for the ouster of Ms Macapagal.

He attributed this to the lack of support from the military and the police.

"For people power to succeed, the two elements of people power and military participation must be present," he said. "One without the other is a prescription for failure."

The senator also said mounting another people power revolt would only bring chaos and further divide the people.

He warned that the military and those sectors supporting it might not even hand over the reins of government to the constitutional leadership once they succeeded in their uprising.

"The military may want to provide the solutions to the prevailing problems by itself and hold on to power. But the military's ability may not be sufficient to run the country," he said.

Biazon added that an "Edsa IV" aimed at removing the President would also lead to the downfall of the Philippines' democratic institutions.

He urged the people to allow the President to focus her attention on solving the country's problems.

If she succeeds, that will be good for the country, and if she fails, the people will judge her in the 2004 election, he said. ***With reports from Volt Contreras, Dona Z. Pazzibugan, Martin P. Marfil and Cynthia D. Balana***

Allies seek Gloria OK to US exile

From page A1

alist People's Coalition (NPC) yesterday said.

Macarambon said exiling Estrada would ensure political stability in the country, which is facing Edsa IV following the former President's decision to dismiss his lawyers because, according to him, he cannot get justice from the courts.

Macarambon said an Edsa IV, or an uprising by Estrada's supporters similar to the assault on Malacañang on May 1 last year, would be "fatal to the economy."

Based on the title of the draft resolution, Estrada may have to stay outside the country for some time. The measure is called a "Resolution Strongly Urging President Macapagal-Arroyo to send former President Estrada into Transitory Exile Pending the Restoration of Political Stability and Full Economic Recovery."

Should he be exiled, Estrada's trial in the Sandiganbayan for plunder and other criminal charges should be suspended, according to Macarambon.

"The trial would be suspended until such time that we have a healthy political situation," said Macarambon who favors sending Estrada to a country which has an extradition treaty with the Philippines.

But Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri said the "Spice Boys" would oppose a resolution for Estrada's exile by filing a counter-resolution. "We cannot agree to exile without justice," he said.

Other members of the House said exiling Estrada was Ms Macapagal's call, and that she should in fact do it.

Opposition Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, who was Estrada's executive secretary, said it was not true that exile had no basis in law.

Law allows banishment

The Revised Penal Code provides *destierro* or banishment from the place where a certain crime was committed, Zamora pointed out.

"We already said that his is a problem that President Macapagal-Arroyo does not need right now. One good way out is to allow (former) President Estrada to go abroad for medical treatment and after that maybe the problem will go away," he said.

Zamora said the President must "make a political decision . . . (and) convince the courts one way or another to allow (Estrada's) medical treatment (abroad)."

But Sen. Rodolfo Biazon maintains that exile for Estrada "has no legal or constitutional basis." In the absence of any law, exile can only be granted if a legitimate process is followed, according to Biazon.

He said this could come in the "form of the President issuing a presidential proclamation to be concurred in by Congress granting exile to Estrada."

"This should only be considered if this is the only means to stop total chaos in the country," said Biazon, an opposition senator.

House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla said there was no minority stand supporting exile for Estrada, but if exile was good for the country the initiative should come from the administration.

"It requires a presidential decision," he said, because the Office of the President, through the Department of Foreign Affairs, was empowered to negotiate with a receiving country.

Makati Rep. Agapito "Butz" Aquino of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino defended the proposal to send Estrada into exile from critics, including former President Fidel Ramos, who said on Sunday that it would ruin democracy in the country.

"Erap was elected by 10 million Filipinos so we have to understand their feelings. Whether this 10 million made a wrong decision remains to be proven," Aquino said.

Cast first stone

He said Philippine democracy was more stable than Ramos' estimation. "Let those who is without sin cast the first stone," Aquino said to Ramos.

Aquino said allowing Estrada to leave would demonstrate that Ms Macapagal was compassionate and would lead to national healing.

This is the same line taken by Sen. Gregorio Honasan, who said Estrada's brief absence in the country for a knee operation could bring a "temporary cooling down" period.

"All it takes is a magnanimous gesture of compassion for humanitarian reason," he said. "It can be calibrated to make sure that Estrada will come back."

Honasan said the President should not leave the matter to the Sandiganbayan.

He expressed concern over reports that some supporters of Estrada had gone to the countryside to muster support for the former President's appeal for medical treatment in the United States.

Honasan, a former Army officer who led several coup attempts against former President Corazon Aquino, said that failure to address the problem might lead to a series of complicated events.

Against exile

House Assistant Majority Leader Francis Escudero of the NPC said Estrada should have been exiled before he was formally charged in the Sandiganbayan.

Escudero said exiling Estrada at this time would not be good for both sides because it would weaken the justice system and show Estrada's guilt.

Negros Occidental Rep. Jose Apolinario Lozada Jr., who has withdrawn his support from the House resolution for Estrada's surgery abroad, said exiling Estrada would make a mockery of the law.

Zambales Rep. Ruben Torres, executive secretary during the Ramos administration, also opposed sending Estrada into exile. "I don't believe in this scare scenario of Estrada's supporters," he said of the possibility of an uprising should Estrada be kept in the country.

Batangas Rep. Frank Perez, son of Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, is considering withdrawing his signature from the resolution because of the "threat" of an Edsa IV by the Estrada camp.

Zubiri said the "Spice Boys" and most of the members of the "Mindanao bloc" were formally withdrawing their support from the resolution.

They signed the resolution on the condition that the intention was medical treatment abroad on humanitarian grounds, he said. "But it seems that they now have a different intention."

More signatories withdrew from the resolution after Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez stated that this should be shelved. Gonzalez was followed by House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II, Representatives Prospero Nograles (one of the nine authors), Robert Ace Barbers, Edgar Erice and other members of the majority.

In the Senate, administration senators, who signed a counterpart resolution, are now "rethinking" their position.

"In light of recent current events, it is safe to say that many of us are now rethinking whether or not to withdraw our signatures," Sen. Ralph Recto said.

Different environment

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay pointed out that "the circumstances and environment two weeks ago (when they signed the resolution) were very different."

"Before, it was purely for mercy and medical issues. But it has now become politicized," he said. "We should now defend our judicial system which is being eroded by (Estrada's) act of withdrawing his lawyers," Magsaysay said.

"If (Estrada) does not trust the judicial system, then I might reconsider (and withdraw my signature)," said Sen. Robert Barbers.

Even Sen. Noli de Castro, who had earlier said he believed Estrada would keep his word and would return to the country after the operation, is having second thoughts.

"Even if (Estrada) himself says that he will come back, I don't think I will be as convinced as I was when I signed the resolution," De Castro said.

He said that "should the idea of exile come from Estrada's camp, then definitely, I will withdraw my signature."

Other administration senators who signed the resolution were Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda-Leviste, Juan Flavier and Ramon Revilla. ***With a report from Cynthia D. Balana***

Exile? Never, says Perez

By Michael Lim Ubac

JUSTICE Secretary Hernando Perez yesterday maintained that the Macapagal administration would never support moves to send deposed President Joseph Estrada into exile.

"Even if we want to, we cannot because (exile) is not among the penalties provided for in the Revised Penal Code," Perez told reporters.

Perez said allowing the jailed ex-President, who is being tried in the Sandiganbayan for plunder and four other criminal cases, to leave the country "is not within the ambit of the law."

He also said it was the policy of the Macapagal administration not to interfere with the independence of a co-equal branch of government like the judiciary.

"If we will allow him to leave the country, this will lead to the erosion of people's trust and confidence in the country's judicial system," he added.

AN URGENT APPEAL
TO THE COMMISSION ON APPOINTMENTS

We see no valid justification for any further delay in the confirmation of Transportation and Communications Secretary Pantaleon D. Alvarez. The national interest suffers as the Secretary's effectiveness in carrying out his mandate is greatly hampered by the continued impasse in his confirmation.

The charges against Secretary Alvarez have all been answered!

The detractors of the Secretary continue to rehash old unsubstantiated and malicious allegations.

✓On the DOTC-PIATCO concession agreement:

Secretary Alvarez had no hand in the formulation of the concession agreement between the government and PIATCO for the construction of NAIA Terminal 3. *As DOTC Secretary, it is his duty and responsibility to execute a legally binding contract that had been declared valid and binding by the Ombudsman, and above board by two congressional investigations.*

✓On the pending court cases:

The court cases against the Secretary are nothing but harassment tactics meant to derail his confirmation. We should leave the courts to decide freely on the merits of the cases. This should not be used to derail the Secretary's confirmation.

✓On the fears of job losses at NAIA 3:

The fears expressed by some labor groups that there would be massive job losses as a result of the NAIA 3 operations are unfounded. The new facility will, in fact, result in more job opportunities.
The NAIA 3 concessionaire has assured that it would hire more workers to man the modern and sprawling facility.

✓On the future of DMIA:

Secretary Alvarez has given his commitment to make representation with concerned parties to drop the provision in the concession agreement that some Pampanga NGOs feel would stunt the development of the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport.

Secretary Alvarez is the right man for DOTC:

With his devotion to public duty, his work ethic and unblemished public service record, Secretary Alvarez upholds the high professional and ethical standards of the Arroyo administration.

Even as legislator representing the people of Davao, Secretary Alvarez had already manifested his pro-poor, pro-Filipino, reformist and action-oriented leadership.

We strongly believe that he is the right man to steer the Department of Transportation and Communications into greater achievements.

Hear the voices from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao...

I shall pray that you may receive your confirmation from the Commission on Appointments as soon as possible so that you can go full speed in your work for the counrty • We believe in his sincerity and capacity to effect reforms, to curb corruption and malpractices in the Department of Transportation and Communications • Secretary Alvarez has initiated measures which had become beneficial to shipping firms • We are confident that he can spearhead Mindanao towards prosperity and progress, by empowering the poor to have access to good transportation and communication • We are steadfast in our support for Secretary Alvarez's distinguished and able leadership • His numerous programs and reform measures have led to improved services to the stakeholders in the transportation and communications sector • His performance has been exemplary and meritorious. He has been a big help to the industry • Being a Mindanaoan, he fully understands the needs and problems of the region and other depressed areas in the country • Secretary Alvarez's confirmation will be a boon not only for Mindanao but for the entire country • Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez has demonstrated the requisite technical expertise and managerial skills needed of an effective and efficient DOTC secretary. His track record is impressive • We believe in his integrity, sincerity and capability to lead and address our serious concerns • Secretary Alvarez's continued concern for the proper and sustainable tourism development have contributed much to its successful tourism program • We commend the stance of Secretary Alvarez for defending and protecting private sector investors • His youthful leadership gives us hope that under the Arroyo government, there are government functionaries who would risk defending and protecting private sector investments rather than succumb to pressure just to become popular • We firmly believe in the great wisdom of the Honorable members of the Commission on Appointments in confirming Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez as he is qualified, competent and capable • The youth and students from the different Districts and Schools of Davao support the confirmation of Secretary Alvarez

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advt.

Els survives Woods scare, pockets title

ELS: A winner again. AP

MIAMI, Florida— Ernie Els, who began the final round with a commanding eight-stroke lead, withstood a charge from Tiger Woods yesterday to win the $4.7 million Genuity Championship by two shots from the world number one.

Australian Peter Lonard finished third, six shots back, and 1999 Kemper Open champion Rich Beem took fourth place, eight shots behind Els at the Doral Golf Resort and Spa.

"I was still very concerned to win this golf tournament, a couple of good shots into the last, two-putt there and I am a happy man," Els said of his first victory on the US PGA Tour in 24 events.

"It was a difficult day, it was. Obviously I let him play the way I did the first three rounds scoring-wise," said the 32-year-old South African after he recorded a closing level-par 72 for a total of 271, 17 under.

It turned into a tale of two nines for Woods, who fired a 66 for 273, and world No. 5 Els. What looked like an impossible margin to overcome withered after Woods opened his round with three consecutive birdies.

Els began with a birdie but bogeys at the second and sixth suddenly made him appear vulnerable. Woods's 12-foot birdie putt on the ninth then cut the lead to three strokes.

"I got off to a pretty good start on the first hole, but gave it straight back on the second," Els said. "I just felt I was on my back foot from then on. I was kind of catching up a little bit.

"I saw Tiger birdie the first three holes. After that, I knew I was in for a pretty long, tough day." Woods, on the other hand, did everything he wanted to do on the front nine.

"I just wanted to cut it in half by nine holes," said Woods, who went out in 32. "If you are at any time within a four-shot lead with nine holes to go, you have got a chance. I was able to do that and a little bit more."

The back nine proved a struggle for both players. Woods birdied both par fives, the 10th and 12th, to chop the lead to a single stroke before Els went two shots clear with a birdie on the 12th. *Reuters*

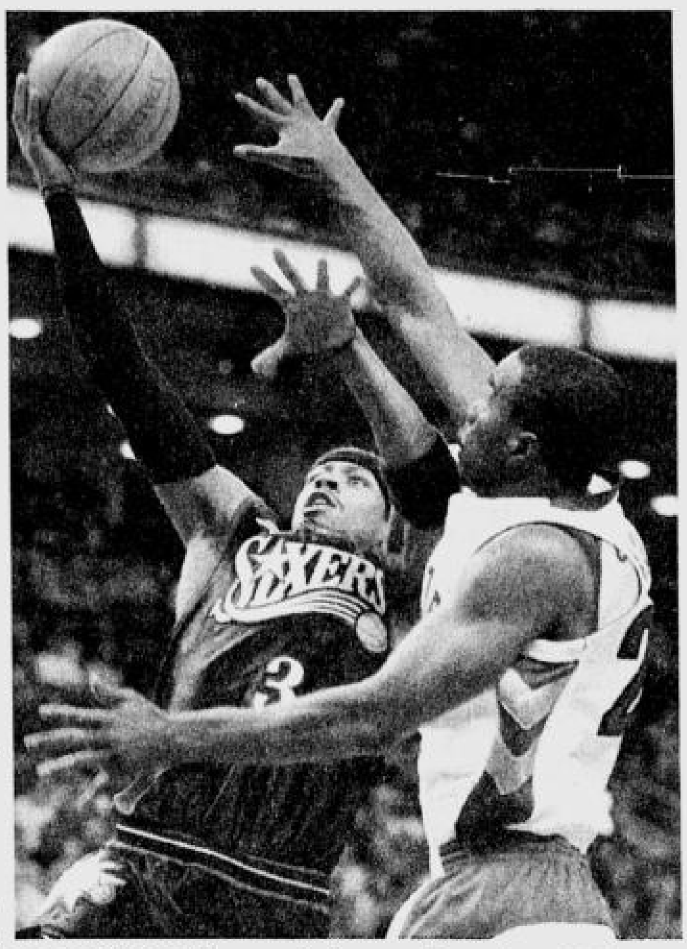
Paeng London entry

FOUR-TIME World Cup champion Paeng Nepomuceno returns to action next month when he competes in the 2002 World Tenpin Masters in London.

Matchroom Sport, promoter of the tournament, announced Nepomuceno is among 16 players from 13 countries entered in the Masters. Nepomuceno won the title in 1999 for which he was awarded the Philippine Legion of Honor medal. He placed 3rd in the tournament last year.

The fifth running of the event, sanctioned by the European Tenpin Bowling Federation, will take place on April 12, 13 and 14 at the Goresbrook Leisure Centre, Dagenham, East London.

Iverson stars for 76ers



IVERSON (with ball) soars to the hoop past Raptors' guard Alvin Williams during their NBA game yesterday. Iverson scored 42 points to lead the 76ers to a 96-84 win. Other results: San Antonio 99, New York 83; New Jersey 92, Chicago 84; Seattle 96, Memphis 71; Detroit 83, Charlotte 81; Indiana 97, Sacramento 86; Washington 107, Orlando 102, OT; Milwaukee 101, Cleveland 91; Dallas 116, Denver 110, OT; L.A. Lakers 95, Houston 79. AP

TORONTO—Allen Iverson topped the 40-point mark for the second game in a row, and the Philadelphia 76ers dealt the Toronto Raptors their 11th straight loss, 96-84 Sunday.

Iverson scored 42 points, 24 in the second half, on 16-for-37 shooting for the Sixers, who won their third consecutive game. He had 43 in Friday's victory over the New Jersey Nets.

Iverson has scored at least 40 points seven times this season.

Vince Carter, playing his fourth game since coming off the injured list, had just 12 points for the Raptors, who are on their longest losing slide in four years.

Derrick Coleman added 18 points and 13 rebounds for the Sixers while Antonio Davis had 26 points for the Raptors. *AP*

Buhain wants NSAs to submit needs by March 15

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINE Sports Commission yesterday asked the national sports associations to submit their request for training and competition equipment not later than March 15 in line with the agency's bid to fast-track the preparation for the Asian Games in September.

PSC chair Eric Buhain said the agency wants to make sure that all athletes honing up for the Busan Asiad get to have everything they need when they embark on their training.

The PSC also requested the NSAs to give their training programs, particularly the schedules for foreign exposures of the Asiad-bound athletes, which is expected to reach 180 when all qualifying events are over by July.

"The PSC is doing everything it can to ensure that the Asiad-bound athletes are well-provided," said Buhain. "Since we shall be handling the sourcing and procurement of equipment and uniforms, we want to start as early as now to avoid last-minute problems."

Sources inside the PSC said Buhain is also trying to avoid getting the blame in the event that the athletes didn't perform well in the Games, which has happened in the past.

"We want to boost the morale of the athletes and at the same time stress the we have high hopes on them to give their best performance in the Asiad," Buhain said. "We will exhaust all means to finance the athletes, but it's their duty to give it their best shot."

Buhain said the agency allotted P120 million for the preparations of the 23 NSAs seeing action in the Games. So far, there are 136 athletes who made the criteria set by the joint PSC-Philippine Olympic Committee also known as the Asiad Task Force.

The PSC is also set to spend P30 million for the actual Games, particularly for the air fare, accommodation and allowances of the participants. In last year's Southeast Asian Games, the PSC gave each member of the delegation $300.

However, Task Force insiders said the amount might be cut since travel and hotel expenses in Korea are much higher compared to Malaysia.

Serena defeats Capriati

SERENA Williams of Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., returns a volley from Jennifer Capriati during the final round of the State Farm Tennis Classic yesterday in Scottsdale, Arizona. Williams won, 6-2, 4-6, 6-4. AP

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona— Third-seeded Serena Williams held off top-seeded Jennifer Capriati, 6-2, 4-6, 6-4 on Sunday to capture the $585,000 Scottsdale Open.

Capriati needed the victory to regain the top spot in the WTA rankings after losing the position to Serena's sister Venus Williams a week ago.

Serena Williams earned $93,000 with the win and will have moved up one place to number six in the world when the new tennis rankings are unveiled on Monday. *AFP*

Hewitt edges Agassi in San Jose Open final

SAN JOSE, California—World No. 1 Lleyton Hewitt saved two match points before scrapping past Andre Agassi 4-6 7-6 (8-6) 7-6 (7-4) in a dramatic final at the $400,000 San Jose Open on Sunday.

After winning a tense third set tiebreak when Agassi missed a forehand return, Hewitt screamed in delight and pumped his fists to signal the end of a classic match that featured constant end-to-end rallies and long, nail-biting exchanges.

Hewitt said it was one of the best matches he had played. "It's right up there, with my Davis Cup wins over (Gustavo) Kuerten and (Albert) Costa and beating (Pete) Sampras at the U.S. Open.

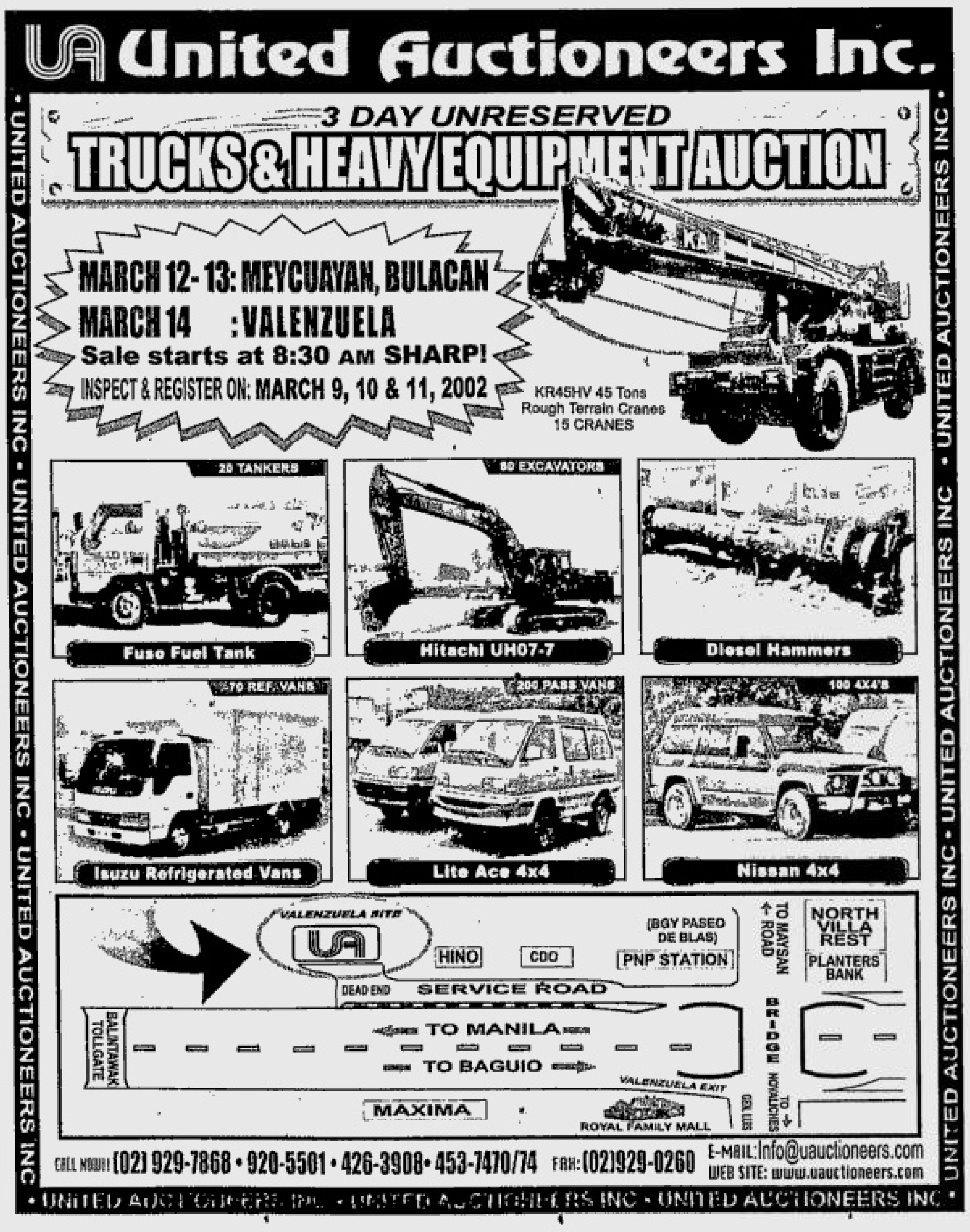
"To come through three hours and keep that level up against a guy who doesn't take his foot off the pedal at all, come up with big points in a third set tiebreaker, and stay mentally tough considering I haven't played in a while is something I wouldn't have expected to do.

Hewitt, playing in his first tournament for six weeks because of chicken pox, said: "I believe in myself and know what I'm capable of.

"I've had to come through tough conditions in the past and it makes me a stronger person. Like in Davis Cup away ties, I'm probably one of the best guys to send out there.

Agassi, playing in his first event since injuring his wrist in mid-January, said: "Lleyton has a good ability to sense and step in big situations.

"He's a great competitor, his game is consistent and when he's down he plays big situations aggressively and takes control of the point. That's the sign of somebody who's ready for big moments. He has great skill and is earning his place with the best of us.



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Best Center basketball sked

MILO Best Center has come up with three new venues for its summer basketball classes—Arellano University's courts in Legarda, Pasay and Caniogan (Pasig). Clinics at Legarda and Pasay will be held every Tuesday and Friday from April 2 to 25, while sessions at Caniogan will be conducted every Monday and Thursday from April 1 to 25. The complete schedule: Arellano Legarda—8:30 to 11:30 a.m., levels I and 2, age group 7 and above; 1 to 4 p.m., level 3 and refresher, 9 and above. Arellano Pasay—8:30 to 11:30 a.m., levels 1 and 2, 7 and above, 1 to 4 p.m., levels 3 and 4, 9 and above. Arellano Caniogan—1:30 to 4:30 p.m., level 1, all age groups; level 2, 7 and above.

Boys and girls who are interested to join may visit or call either The BEST Center at 34 Scout Lozano corner Scout Reyes, Barangay Lagin Handa, QC, tel. nos. 411-6260 and 372-3065/66; or Dansei Groom Shop/Sensei Salon, 5/F, Holiday Inn Manila, UN Avenue, tel. no. 525-8191.

Torre leads La Union winners

Standings after two rounds: Torre, Antonio, Garma, Gonzales, Senador, Martinez, Sales, Ranola, Maga, Flores, Cabrido, Dela Cruz, Legaspi, Agagon, Datu, Glcain, Salimbagat, Gatus, Singangote, Alisangco, Suclo, Labay, Milagrosa, Vasquez, Gabawan, Tuliao, Balico, Valencia, Abas, Suares, Pacis 2.0 points.

SAN FERNANDO, La Union—Grandmaster Eugene Torre yesterday outsteadied Basilio Pandan, Jr. of the Philippine Army in 50 moves of a Sicilian-Paulsen in the second round of the 2002 La Union Open chess championship.

Torre, the highest-rated player among the 150 participants here, scored his second straight win to join early winners GM Joey Antonio, IMs Chito Garma, Jayson Gonzales, Fide Master Jesse Noel Sales, NMs Emmanuel Senador, Rolly Martinez, Yves Ranola, Mirabeau Maga and Julius Sinangote.

Antonio whipped NM Efren Bagamasbad; Garma, the No. 3 seed, downed dentist Jenny Mayor; Gonzales (No. 4) defeated Joel Cocjin; Senador topped Jermel Abordo; Martinez turned back reigning national women's champion Joann Toledo, while Sales, Ranola and Maga also disposed of their respective opponents.

Gov. Victor F. Ortega (seated, right) of La Union does the ceremonial moves with National Chess Federation (NCFP) president Mat V. Defensor (seated, left) during the opening ceremonies of the 2002 La Union Open Chess Championship in the City of San Fernando. Watching are (from left) NCFP Region I coordinator Joseph Dumuk, NCFP secretary general Sammy Estimo, GM Joey Antonio, GM Eugene Torre, Marilin Torre, Mayor Mary Jane C. Ortega of San Fernando City and artist Leonardo Hidalgo.

RP Open Pro-Am tomorrow at Wack Wack

A UNIQUE Pro-Am set for tomorrow shotgun style will kick off the much-awaited Casino Filipino 87th Philippine Open at Wack Wack East.

Sixty professionals will be teamed up with 180 amateurs in the 18-hole affair featuring 60 teams.

"Our main aim is to make the tournament loaded with fun while we give our professionals the chance to really sample the course," said Gen. Antonio Abaya of Fortune Tobacco, who is co-chair of the Pro-Am with Vicente "Teng" Santos.

Participants will be treated to a raffle worth P400,000 Wednesday evening starting at 6 o'clock at the Ballroom A and B of the plush Wack Wack clubhouse.

The best score of every four-man team will count in the competition, a prelude to the Casino Filipino 87th Philippine Open presented by San Miguel Corporation and backed principally by Mitsubishi.

The fabled RP Open, Asia's oldest professional golf tournament, will begin on Thursday and end on Sunday.

The first tee off shotgun tomorrow will be at 6:30 a.m. The second set of 30 teams will be flagged off at 12 noon.

"We decided on having two tee off times in order to ensure good traffic on the course," said Andy Dumlao, chief coordinator of Pro-Am.

Rod Feliciano, president of the organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines, will be among those teeing off tomorrow together with tournament executive committee co-chair Ben Abalos, tournament committee chair Danny Pizarro, Wack Wack general manager SP Malbarosa and organizing committee chair Benny Gopez.

Of the 60 pros entered, 40 are foreigners.

"We are on course," said Pizarro. "Like last year's Open, we hope to score another big one this year—if not improve on the 86th Open."

FELICIANO

Kite defeats Watson in Senior Classic playoff

SANTA CLARITA, California —Tom Kite parred the second hole of a playoff yesterday with Tom Watson to win the SBC Senior Classic.

Watson had eagle on the 18th hole to complete a round of 1-under 71. Kite, who opened the final round two strokes behind Watson, birdied the 18th for a 3-under 69, forging a tie with Watson at 4-under 212.

After each golfer had a par on the first playoff hole, Watson missed the fairway with his drive on the second hole of the playoff, the par-4 10th. He left his approach short of the green and chipped to within 8 feet (2.4 meters).

Kite hit the green in regulation and missed a 10-foot birdie putt. After Watson missed a 6-foot (1.8-meter) par putt, Kite tapped in for the victory.

The victory, worth $217,500, was Kite's fifth on the senior tour. *AP*

KITE

AP

WORLD RECORD
Russia's Svetlana Feofanova reacts after setting a new indoor world record at 4.75 meters to win the women's pole vault competition at the European Indoor Athletics championships in Vienna on Sunday.

BSC Access scooter champ

CARMONA, CAVITE—BSC Access Plus ruled the 1st Gearhead Metro Shop Scooter Endurance Series at the Carmona Circuit Philippines yesterday.

The quartet of lead driver Gilbert Maaningas, Dino Cahanding, Lucky Loya and guest driver John Newton—a GP 125 champion in Australia—used a mere Stock Dragnet 180 scooter with no modifications compared with their rivals' high-tech, modified engines.

But with strategy and teamwork, they completed a total of 233 laps in the grueling four-hour endurance race and went home with a total prize of P13,000—P3,000 for clinching the Open class crown and P10,000 for being the overall winner.

"We really prepared for this. We switched drivers only twice when we had to refuel. That was our main strategy so as not to waste much time," said Maningas after the event organized by Gearhead Moto Shop headed by former Karter of the Year Philip Alvendia and sponsored by Shell Advance motorcycle oils, Bridgestone, Access Plus, 89.9 TM and 99.5 RT.

BSC Access Plus even finished with a 20-lap margin over Top Bike Services Team composed of Randy Tancicco, Billy Martin and Erick Alfaro who completed 213 laps and received a total of P7,000—P5,000 for the overall runner-up and P2,000 for ending second in the Open class.

Team Café Anne's, bannered by Edwin Buenavista, Carlo Yazo and Ivan Santigco, finished third overall and third in the Open class to bring home a total of P3,000.

5-cock derby begins tonight

MANDALUYONG Coliseum's big-time 5-cock derby rages at 7 tonight, heading more than 50 encounters. Sponsors are Sagupaan Super Feeds and Washout Shampoo.

To host the event is Jimmy Mariquit of Angeles City, who is well-known in derby circuits in Pampanga, Bulacan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Zambales.

Among those seeing action are Jet Fernando, Ramon Mancenares, Muroy Dolorico, Terence Madlambayan, Eric Lu, sabong idol Patrick Antonio, Vic Yu, Dennis Roldan, Raymond Velayo, Spider Alcala and the Jingco brothers.

On Thursday is another special 5-cock event with lawyer Rudy Salud, Lito Orillaza and ESM Ruel as hosts.

Meanwhile, the 6th Ucap/TR Phoenix Hammer Jr. 7-Cock derby is all set on March 12 and 14. Derby hosts are Mario Villamor, Tito Reyes, Benjie Lim and Wacky Salud.

For inquiries, contact 531-4003, 531-4005, 534-4110 and 535-2341.

Pampanga hosts Sagupaan cockfest

PAMPANGA and Central Luzon's toughest gamefowl breeders, known for their imported battlecrosses, are all set to compete in the upcoming "Sagupaan Bigtime 5-Cock Invitational Derby" on March 15 at the Pampanga Coliseum, San Fernando City.

Among them are Eric Lu, Jun Jingco, Jet Fernando, Danny Pineda, engineer Ramos, Dan Garcia, Val Lagman, Mayor Punzalan, JV Magsaysay, Dennis Roldan, Edgar Lacsamana, George dela Merced, Alexis Villaroman, Nestor Alcala, Mayor Pagdanganan, Peping Taba, Jimmy Mariquit, Dong Pineda, Jun Yap, Melchor Caluag and B. Balatbat.

"This powerhouse Pampanga and Central Luzon cockers can give their Metro Manila counterparts stiff competition anytime. They are among the best in the country," said *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio, who is hosting the one-day event.

The derby will start at 4 p.m. since more than 90 fights will be held. Interested parties may contact 845-3445.

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Checkmate classes slated

A SECOND batch of enrollees for the Milo Checkmate special Saturday clinic will still be accepted until March 9 at the following venues: St. James College Quezon City, Tandang Sora cor. Mindanao Avenue; Rizal Memorial Sports Complex , Vito Cruz, Manila and Greenhills Center, San Juan. The chess classes will end on March 31. For details, call MCC at 826-8560.

SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ◎ *Assistant Editor* **Edwin M. Villanueva**

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

GOLF: Golfglobe 2002 at 9 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

PGA Genuity Championship, Second Round at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

TENNIS: ATP Siebel Open Finals at 9 p.m. on Star Sports

BASKETBALL: 2002 SEC Women's Basketball Conference Championship at 10 a.m. on ESPN

San Miguel hopes to score 1st win vs FedEx

GAME TOMORROW *(Philsports)*
6p.m.—San Miguel vs Fedex

FEDERAL Express shoots for a share of second place when it meets cellar-dweller San Miguel Beer today in the PBA Samsung Governors Cup at the Philsports Arena.

Energized after discovering the right import combination, the Express are favored to extend their winning streak to three in the 6 p.m. face-off judging from the way they stunned Shell and Sta. Lucia Realty last week.

Jermaine Walker and Tim Moore powered the Express to a 70-64 victory over the Turbochargers before teaming up perfectly again to spark FedEx past the Realtors, 93-83.

A victory tonight will send the Express in a tie with Coca-Cola (3-2) behind league-leaders Purefoods, Alaska, Red Bull and Hapee-RP Team, all of which enjoy 3-1 cards.

But FedEx coach Derrick Pumaren remained cautious on the possibility of beating San Miguel, a team rich in championship experiences.

"They lack the manpower and they had lost three games in a row but the Beermen possess that championship spirit that's hard to beat," said Pumaren after the Express improved their record to 2-2.

Ranged against a rookie squad like the Express, the Beermen will again try to break into the win-column as they attempt to erase the stigma of being the only winless team in the pack.

The last one was the closest the Beermen could get if not for a botched golden opportunity in the dying seconds that allowed Talk N Text to escape with a 82-81 squeaker at the buzzer.

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Shark signs up Ybañez for 1 year

By Dennis Eroa

SPEEDY Warren Ybañez, whose sterling plays earned him MVP honors in the recent PBL Challenge Cup finals, agreed to a one-year contract with two-time champion Shark Energy Drink.

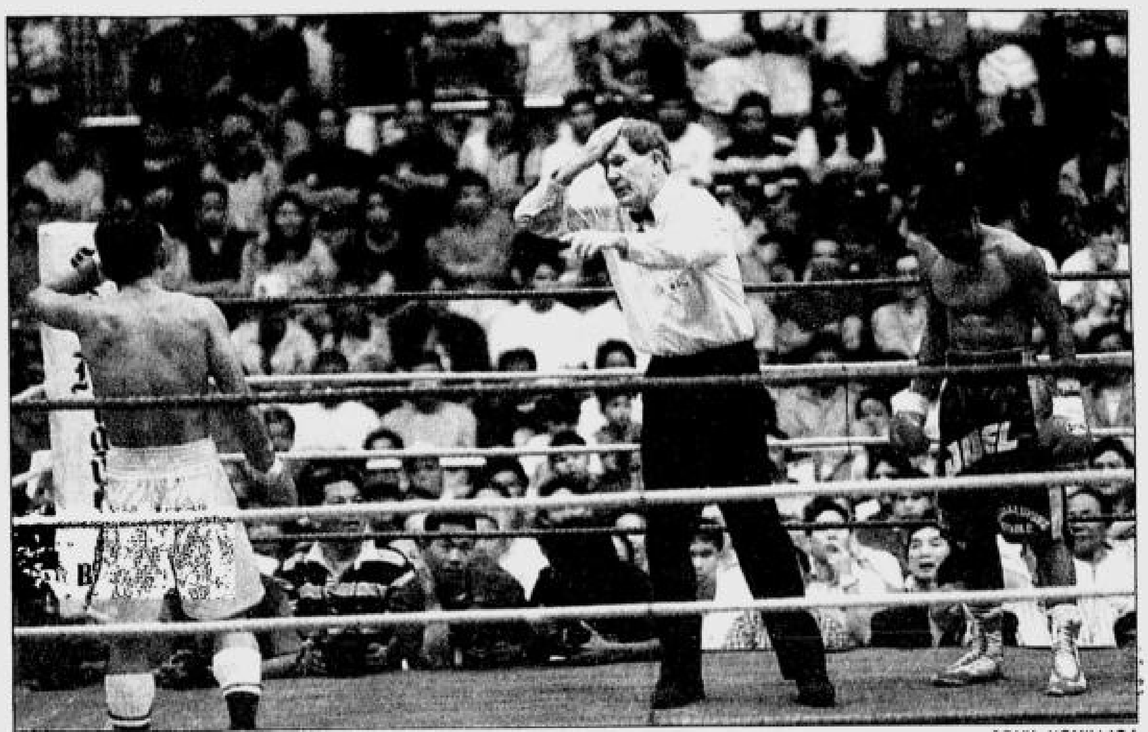
"I'm happy to play for one more season with the Energy Drink Kings. Hopefully, I'll be able to help the franchise win more championships," said the 22-year-old Ybañez.

The 5-foot-8 Cainta resident assumed starter's role for the Energy Drink Kings following the transfer of Michael Robinson to the Olongapo Volunteers in the MBA. With Robinson bothered by offcourt problems, coach Leo Austria fully utilized Ybañez's talents as Shark beat bemedalled Welcoat in the best-of-seven title series for the Challenge Cup diadem.

Jun Balares, a prized find from Baguio City, will serve as Ybañez's reliever.

Shark lost Chester Tolomia and Gilbert Malabanan to the pro ranks, but Austria expects big games from his remaining charges like slam dunk titlist MC Caceres and Bataan-pride Ysmael Junio.

Meanwhile, Manny Dandan, who transformed National University to a title contender in the UAAP wars, will coach newcomer John O' Juzz in the coming conference slated on April 3 at the Makati Coliseum.



ROMY HOMILLADA

ACCIDENTAL HEADBUTT

Referee Bruce McTavish (center) motions to Gerry Peñalosa as Joel Avila, his head bowed, stands in a corner following an accidental headbutt that bloodied Avila's right eyebrow in the eighth round of their WBC international superflyweight fight Saturday night at the Makati Coliseum. McTavish stopped the bout as Peñalosa, who was leading in all judges' scorecards prior to the incident, went on to win by technical decision and stay on course for another shot at the WBC superflyweight crown currently held by Japanese Masamori Tokuyama.

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Fire hits Valenzuela

FIRE was still raging as of press time at the Foremost Textile Co. on Bonifacio Street in East Canumay, Valenzuela City. No injuries had been reported in the fire that started at 2:45 p.m., local authorities said.

Agnes E. Donato

■ Nayon employees want PIM separation pay /A23
■ On Target: Erap's reason for dismissing his lawyers /A23

Don't postpone May polls–Atienza

Congress allocated P1.1B for elections, says mayor

By Jerome Aning

THE ELECTION of barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan officials should no longer be postponed from May to November this year since Congress has allocated P1.1 billion for the political exercise in this year's national budget, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza said yesterday.

Atienza, who is also president of the Metro Manila Mayors League, appealed to senators to be firm in their resolve in not allowing a postponement of the elections.

A bill calling for the postponement of the elections is pending in Congress. The House of Representatives is said to be aggressively pushing for it.

Atienza urged the Senate to shelve the bill, saying that the barangay election was long overdue and that the reason for its postponement—lack of funds—no longer exists.

But political observers have pointed out that mayors would be "very interested" in holding the barangay and SK elections as soon as possible. The barangay level is an important power base for the mayors, and those running want to consolidate their resources for the 2004 local and national elections.

Postponing the barangay and SK elections even for a few months will also send the "wrong signal to the people," according to Atienza.

"We cannot just postpone electoral exercises that are vital to our democracy for the sake of convenience," he said.

He said that even war-ravaged countries in the Balkans held elections.

The last barangay election was held in 1997. An act of Congress had extended their term up to this year, giving barangay officials two more years in office.

For SK officials, the law requires candidates to be 15 to 25 years old. Since 1992, no SK elections have been held, and some SK officials are now overaged for the post.

Today, the average age of SK officials is 26, according to the Manila City Hall.

RECYCLING BY KIDS
Far from suffering from bottle fatigue, these young residents of Payatas, Quezon City can teach their elders a thing or two about recycling and being kind to the environment, as they clean plastic bottles of mineral water that they will later sell to recycling shops.
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NBI to recall 2 witnesses in Nida slay case

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) is again seeking out two witnesses in Nida Blanca murder case who investigators say did not tell the entire truth when they were first interviewed.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco yesterday said his men received information that the two witnesses, who were "close associates of Blanca," withheld information from investigators the first time they were questioned.

"They were not as forthcoming during the first interviews," Wycoco said nearly four months after Blanca's killing.

He said the witnesses had been mentioned before in the media and they are still in the country.

He admitted that the case is "quite difficult" to solve and that the NBI is again "comparing notes" with the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG), the police unit that initially tried to solve the murder.

The NBI took over after the CIDG's main witness, Philip

NBI TO RECALL/ A23

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ALL CLIENTS ARE SCHEDULED BY APPOINTMENT

I have a good reputation, says prisons director

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE EMBATTLED Bureau of Corrections director yesterday said he would step down if his critics could produce any evidence of the alleged anomalies at the New Bilibid Prisons.

"Even if I am not directly involved in the affairs of the NBP, I will immediately resign as a matter of command responsibility if they (critics) could prove I'm guilty," retired Col. Ricardo Macala told the INQUIRER yesterday amid allegations that he and other prison officials were providing special treatment for high-profile inmates in exchange for money.

"I have a good reputation," he said. "If the allegations were true, how come I still don't have a car?"

I HAVE A GOOD/ A23

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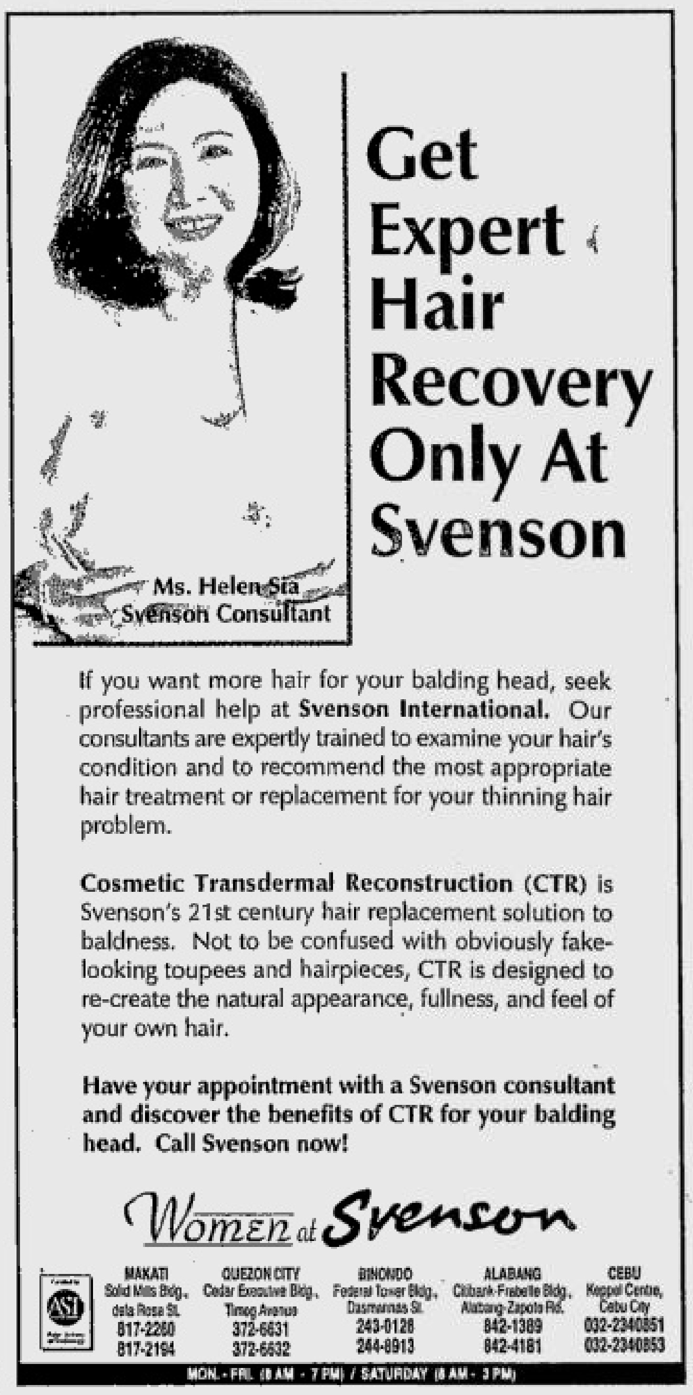

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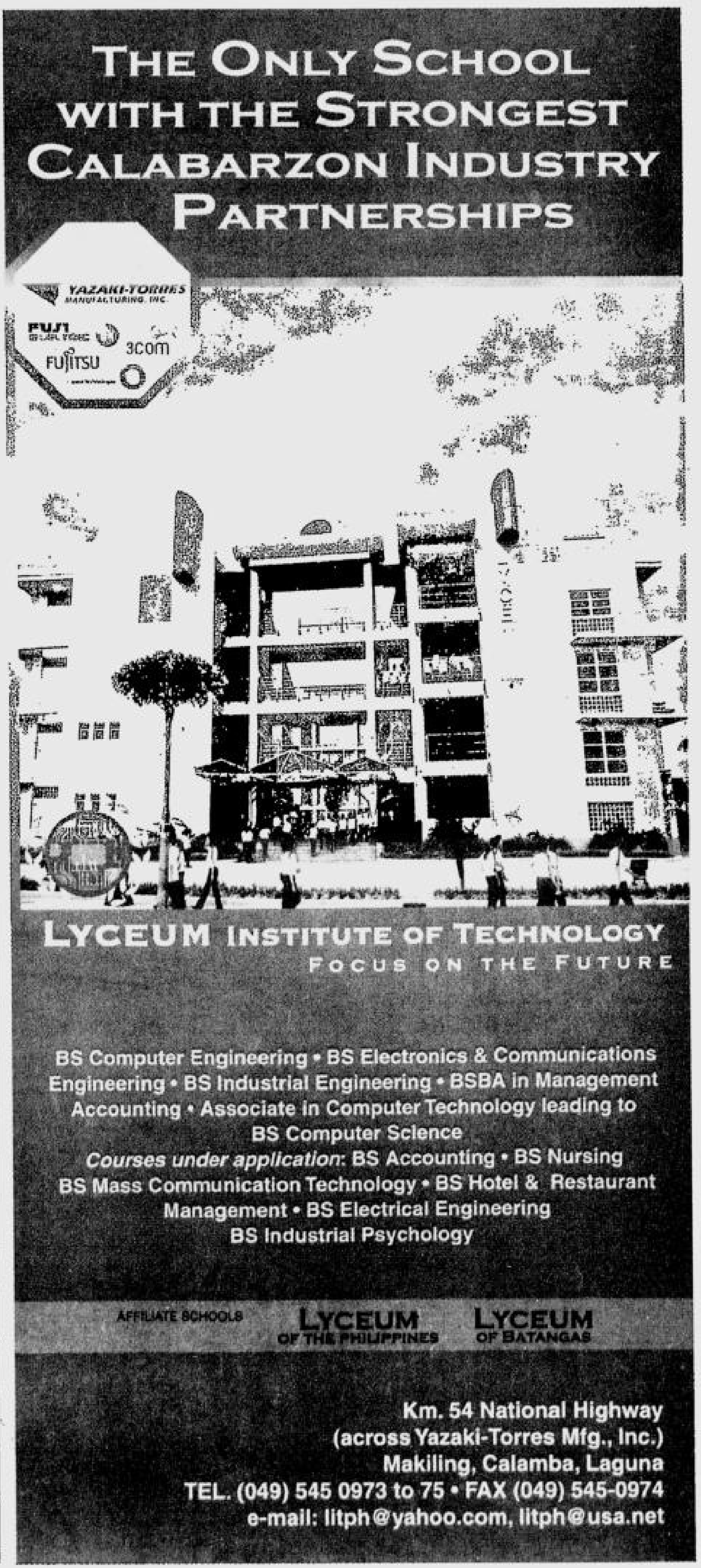

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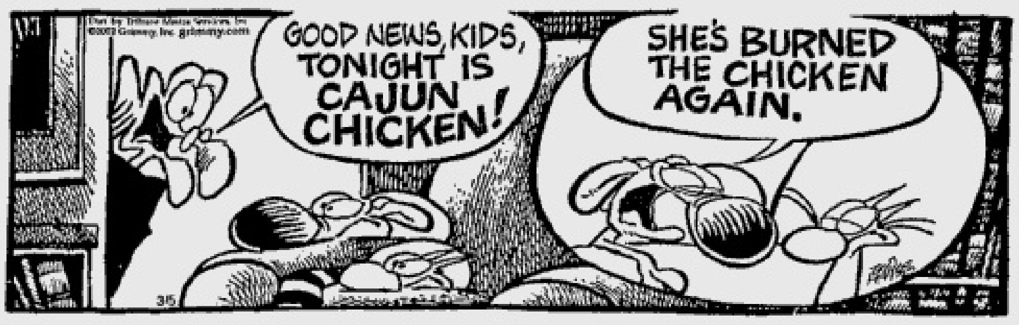
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS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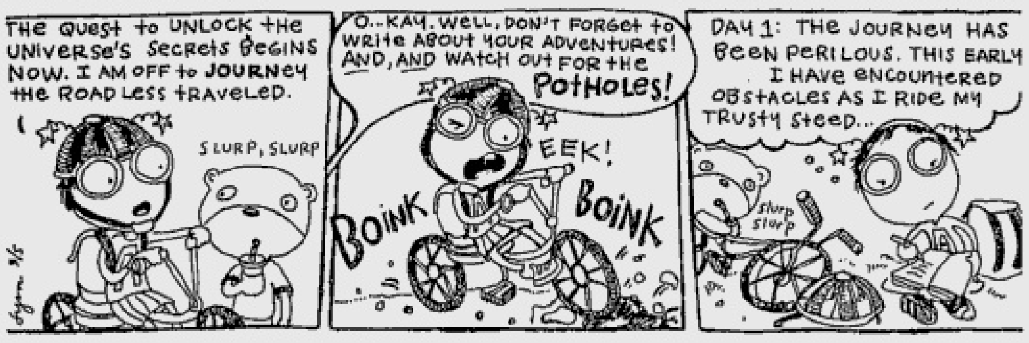
GOOD NEWS, KIDS, TONIGHT IS CAJUN CHICKEN!
SHE'S BURNED THE CHICKEN AGAIN.
3/5

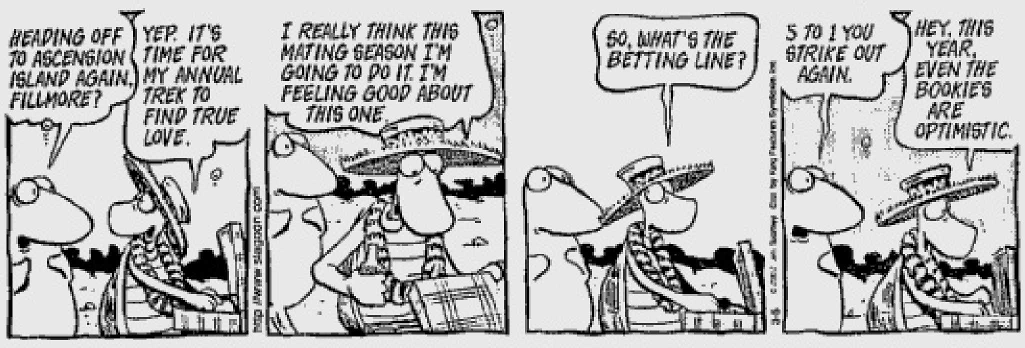
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


THE QUEST TO UNLOCK THE UNIVERSE'S SECRETS BEGINS NOW. I AM OFF TO JOURNEY THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED.
SLURP, SLURP
O..KAY. WELL, DON'T FORGET TO WRITE ABOUT YOUR ADVENTURES! AND, AND WATCH OUT FOR THE POTHOLES!
EEK!
BOINK
BOINK
DAY 1: THE JOURNEY HAS BEEN PERILOUS. THIS EARLY I HAVE ENCOUNTERED OBSTACLES AS I RIDE MY TRUSTY STEED...
slurp slurp

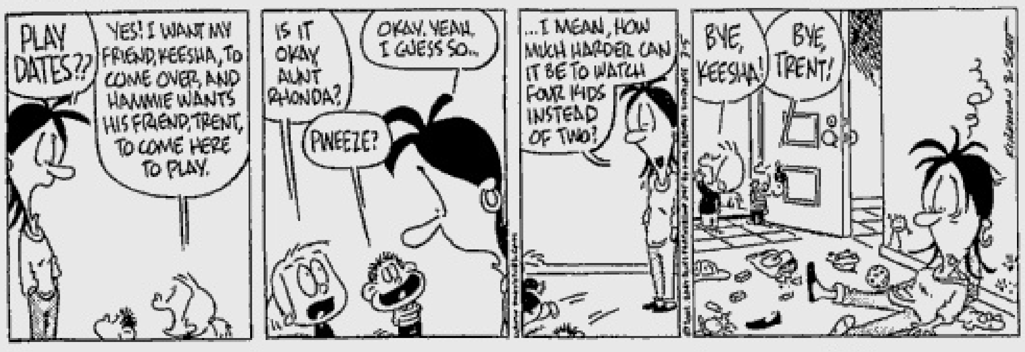
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


HEADING OFF TO ASCENSION ISLAND AGAIN, FILLMORE?
YEP. IT'S TIME FOR MY ANNUAL TREK TO FIND TRUE LOVE.
I REALLY THINK THIS MATING SEASON I'M GOING TO DO IT. I'M FEELING GOOD ABOUT THIS ONE.
http://www.slagoon.com
SO, WHAT'S THE BETTING LINE?
5 TO 1 YOU STRIKE OUT AGAIN.
HEY, THIS YEAR, EVEN THE BOOKIES ARE OPTIMISTIC.

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


PLAY DATES??
YES! I WANT MY FRIEND, KEESHA, TO COME OVER, AND HAMMIE WANTS HIS FRIEND, TRENT, TO COME HERE TO PLAY.
IS IT OKAY, AUNT RHONDA?
OKAY. YEAH. I GUESS SO...
PWEEZE?
...I MEAN, HOW MUCH HARDER CAN IT BE TO WATCH FOUR KIDS INSTEAD OF TWO?
BYE, KEESHA!
BYE, TRENT!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jake Lloyd, Dean Stockwell, Rex Harrison

Happy Birthday: You'll do everything in a big way this year. You will come into secret information that will help you get ahead financially. You'll be likely to inherit property or possessions. You will be compassionate toward those in need. Your insight into future trends will enable you to make the right choices. Your numbers are 8, 15, 23, 26, 31, 35

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You're on a roll so don't stop now. Travel if you can but if not, make sure that you involve yourself in something that will make you think and bring you added wisdom.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Someone will need your help. Bend over backward and you will feel good about what you have done. Personal rewards will be yours.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You will be able to deal with emotional matters that have been bothering you for some time. Your eloquent way of putting things will help smooth out any problem areas

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will be able to make headway where your career and moneymaking skills are concerned. Push to get the position you want today. Your talents will be recognized.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You'll come up with all sorts of brilliant ideas that will enable you to further your creative projects. You should be sure to make time for social events.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Difficulties at home may lead you out the door today. Don't let someone push you or pick an argument with you. Stay cool and refuse to let anyone or anything get to you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Get out and talk to as many people as possible and you'll discover that you really do have a lot to offer. You can be proud of your accomplishments today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Take care of any personal paperwork that has been neglected. You need to tidy up your own matters before you can tend to someone else's. You may want to check out a tax haven that you have heard about.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Take the initiative and do something to counteract any of the ongoing problems that have been bugging you. If someone isn't treating you properly, stop putting up with it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Work behind the scenes in order to push ahead. The more you do without others being aware of your ideas the more of an impact you will make.

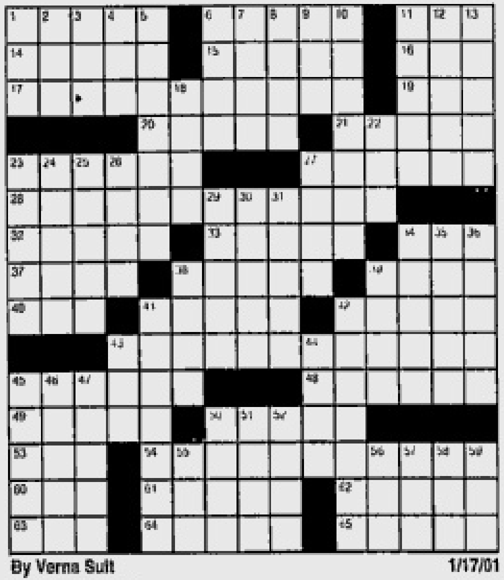
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You'll be dedicated, loyal and ready to take a leadership position. You will have plenty of opportunities to get others to listen to you. Don't let anyone hold you back or stand in your way.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't take what others say to heart today. It probably isn't your fault. You just happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time today. Avoid emotional encounters.

Birthday Baby: You have the ability to visualize and create all sorts of things at a very early age. You are levelheaded, loyal and responsible. You will always want to be doing something worthwhile.

DAILY CROSSWORD

IMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Verna Suit
Silver Spring, MD

1/17/01

ACROSS
1 Tongue of Iran
6 Muse of poets
11 Inc. in London
14 "As You Like It" forest
15 Region on the Nile
16 Meadow mom
17 Uneven odds
19 Card game
20 Smartened (up)
21 Rulers of Russia
23 More nervous
27 Decorative bars
28 Traitorous trader
32 Legendary chalice
33 "Saturday Night Live," e.g.
34 Cribbage marker
37 Pretensions
38 Earn
39 Cry out
40 Cool!
41 Foundation
42 News services
43 Fragile framework
45 Scribble
48 Repeats
49 Fairy-tale evildoer
50 Reside
53 Evergreen
54 Poker provoker
60 Went before
61 WWII submarine
62 Having sufficient space
63 Culbertson of bridge
64 Has trouble with esses
65 Beethoven's "Fur __"

DOWN
1 Sols' precursors
2 Gallery filler
3 Vitamin fig.
4 Part of a min.
5 Dip for a quill
6 Tips
7 Boorish
8 Tucked in for the night
9 Spasm
10 Grown acorn
11 Aboveboard
12 Pirouette
13 Packed
18 Emerald Isle
22 Man's address
23 Mystery award
24 Andrea, the dictator of Genoa
25 Watchman
26 Stately bird
27 Oversupply
29 Gown or sack
30 Creepy
31 Dispatch boat
34 Ballplayer Guerrero
35 Omit in pronunciation
36 Tumbler
38 Sledgehammer
39 Slangy okay
41 "...like a __ of jelly"
42 Doug of "The Virginian"
43 Computer of "2001..."
44 Dropped
45 Fashion
46 Fisherman's basket
47 Rambunctious
50 Performing couples
51 Envelop
52 Salamanders
55 Kimono sash
56 Impresario Hurok
57 Pollo! preceder
58 Mild-mannered beginnings?
59 Whiskey type

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

B	A	S	T		E	L	E	C	T		B	A	R	T
U	C	L	A		S	I	N	A	I		A	L	O	E
F	L	I	G	H	T	F	O	R	M	A	T	I	O	N
F	U	M		E	A	T	S			R	I	N	S	E
			B	A	T	S		H	A	C	K	E	T	T
A	M	P	U	L	E		G	E	N	T	S			
S	A	U	L			C	O	A	T	I		P	A	L
S	Y	M	B	O	L	O	F	V	I	C	T	O	R	Y
N	A	P		R	E	N	E	E			B	O	E	R
			W	I	S	E	R		S	P	A	R	S	E
P	E	E	R	E	S	S		S	P	U	R			
A	D	M	E	N			S	C	A	N		D	I	T
S	W	E	A	T	E	R	N	E	C	K	L	I	N	E
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E	N	D	S		P	O	T	T	Y		U	G	H	S

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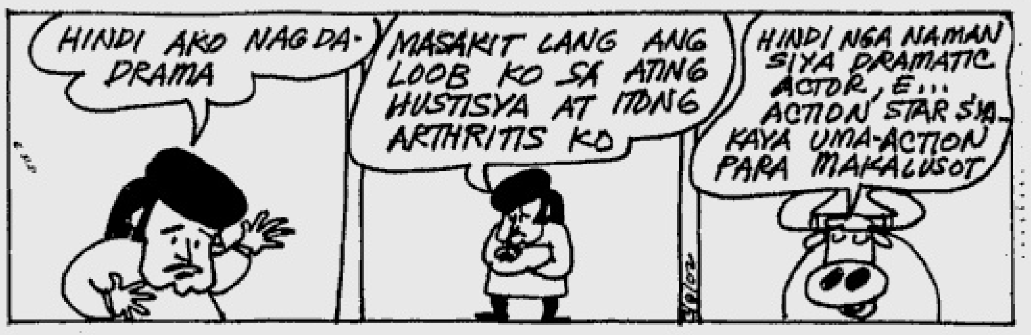
1/13/02

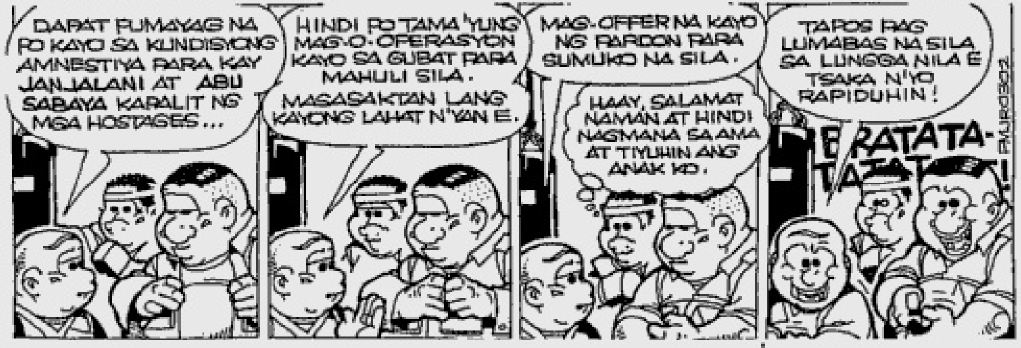
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HINDI AKO NAG DA-DRAMA
MASAKIT LANG ANG LOOB KO SA ATING HUSTISYA AT ITONG ARTHRITIS KO
HINDI NGA NAMAN SIYA DRAMATIC ACTOR, E... ACTION STAR SIYA KAYA UMA-ACTION PARA MAKALUSOT

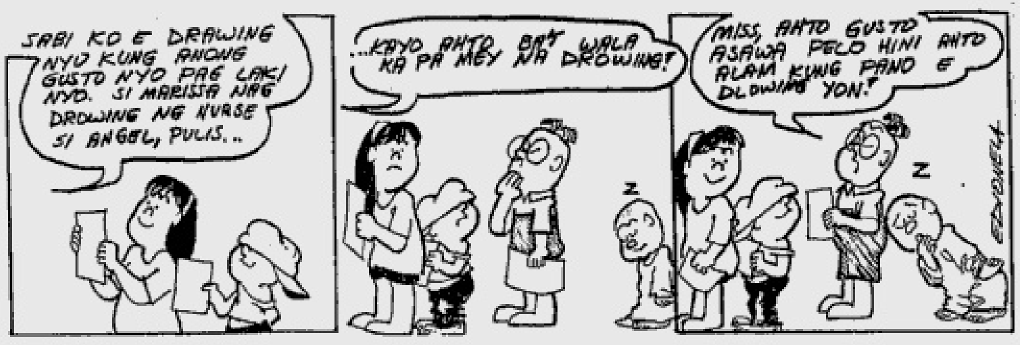
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


DAPAT PUMAYAG NA PO KAYO SA KUNDISYONG AMNESTIYA PARA KAY JANJALANI AT ABU SABAYA KAPALIT NG MGA HOSTAGES...
HINDI PO TAMA 'YUNG MAG-O-OPERASYON KAYO SA GUBAT PARA MAHULI SILA.
MASASAKTAN LANG KAYONG LAHAT N'YAN E.
MAG-OFFER NA KAYO NG PARDON PARA SUMUKO NA SILA.
HAAY, SALAMAT NAMAN AT HINDI NAGMANA SA AMA AT TIYUHIN ANG ANAK KO.
TAPOS PAG LUMABAS NA SILA SA LUNGGA NILA E TSAKA N'YO RAPIDUHIN!
BRATATA-TATAT!
PMJR0302

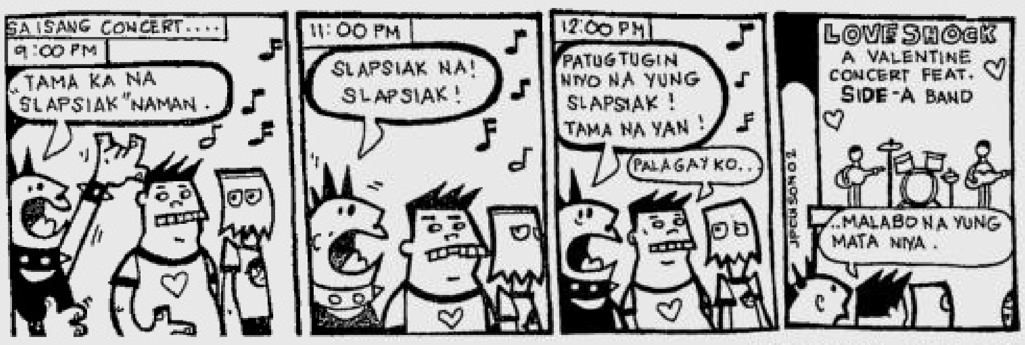
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


SABI KO E DRAWING NYO KUNG ANONG GUSTO NYO PAG LAKI NYO. SI MARISSA NAG DROWING NG NURSE SI ANGEL, PULIS...
...KAYO AHTO BA'T WALA KA PA MEY NA DROWING!
MISS, AHTO GUSTO ASAWA PELO HINI AHTO ALAM KUNG PANO E DLOWING YON!
Z
Z
EDIONELA

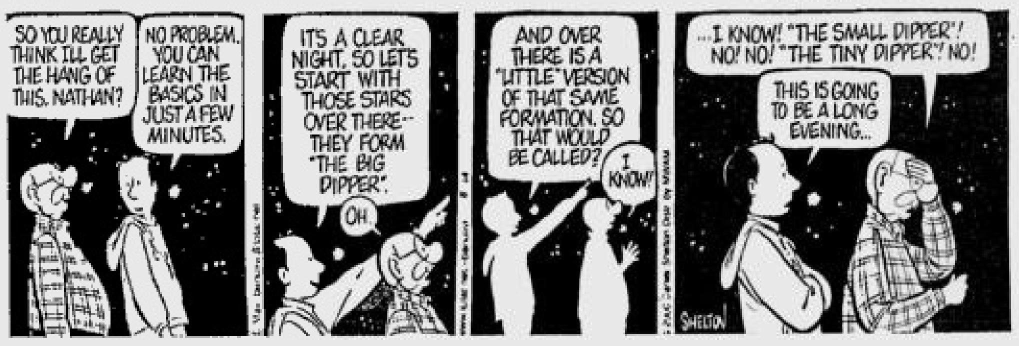
GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL CUISON


SA ISANG CONCERT....
9:00 PM
"TAMA KA NA SLAPSIAK" NAMAN.
11:00 PM
SLAPSIAK NA! SLAPSIAK!
12:00 PM
PATUGTUGIN NYO NA YUNG SLAPSIAK! TAMA NA YAN!
PALAGAY KO..
LOVESHOCK A VALENTINE CONCERT FEAT. SIDE-A BAND
..MALABO NA YUNG MATA NIYA.
JPCUISON02

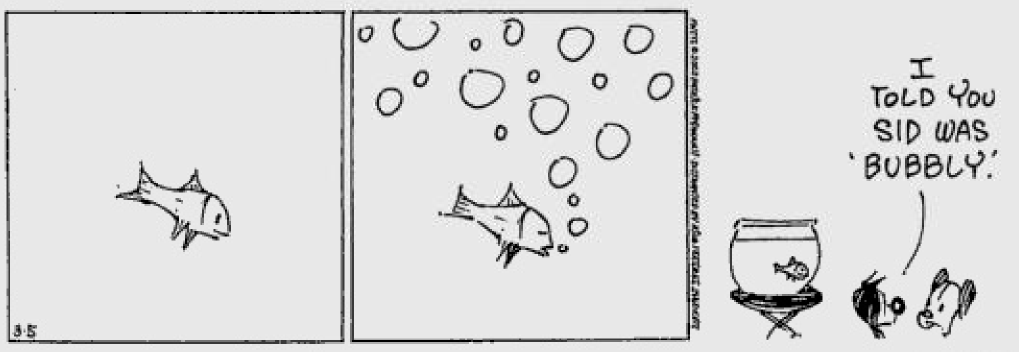
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


SO YOU REALLY THINK I'LL GET THE HANG OF THIS, NATHAN?
NO PROBLEM. YOU CAN LEARN THE BASICS IN JUST A FEW MINUTES.
IT'S A CLEAR NIGHT, SO LET'S START WITH THOSE STARS OVER THERE-- THEY FORM "THE BIG DIPPER".
OH.
AND OVER THERE IS A "LITTLE" VERSION OF THAT SAME FORMATION. SO THAT WOULD BE CALLED?
I KNOW!
...I KNOW! "THE SMALL DIPPER"! NO! NO! "THE TINY DIPPER"! NO!
THIS IS GOING TO BE A LONG EVENING...
SHELTON

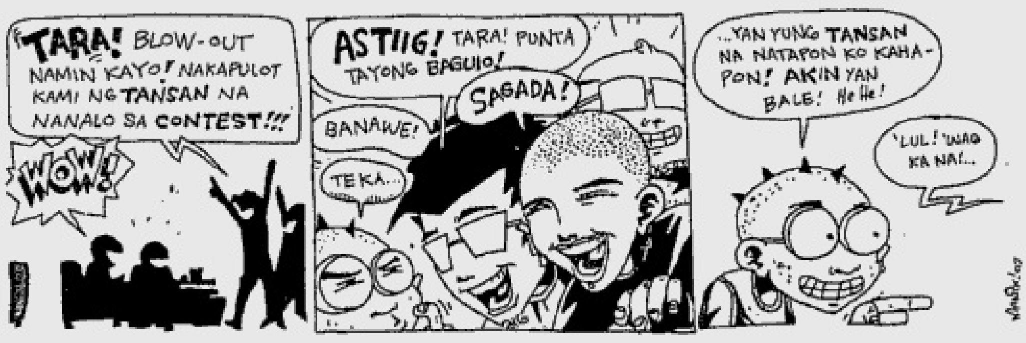
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


3-5
I TOLD YOU SID WAS 'BUBBLY.'

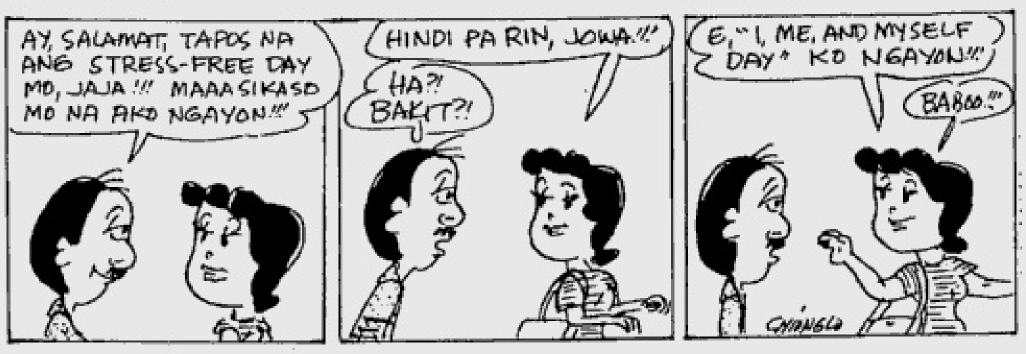
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TARA! BLOW-OUT NAMIN KAYO! NAKAPULOT KAMI NG TANSAN NA NANALO SA CONTEST!!!
WOW!
ASTIIG! TARA! PUNTA TAYONG BAGUIO!
SAGADA!
BANAWE!
TEKA..
...YAN YUNG TANSAN NA NATAPON KO KAHAPON! AKIN YAN BALE! He He!
'LUL! 'WAG KA NA!...

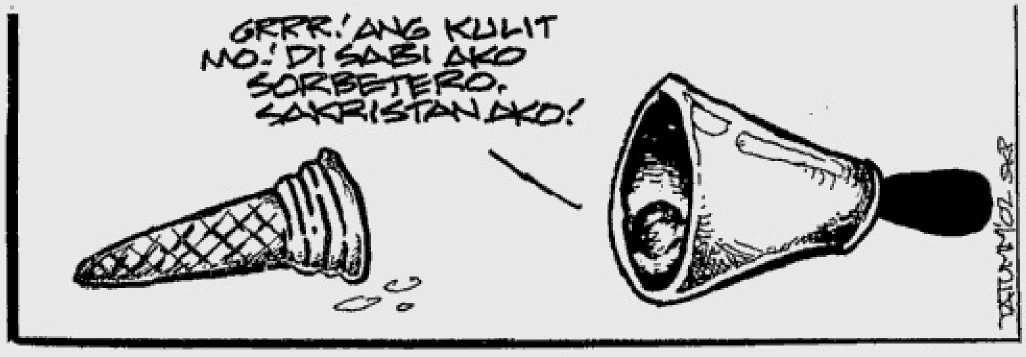
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


AY, SALAMAT, TAPOS NA ANG STRESS-FREE DAY MO, JAJA!!! MAAASIKASO MO NA AKO NGAYON!!!
HINDI PA RIN, JOWA!!!
HA?! BAKIT?!
E, "I, ME, AND MYSELF DAY" KO NGAYON!!!
BABOO!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


GRRR! ANG KULIT MO! DI SABI AKO SORBETERO. SAKRISTAN AKO!

Erap's reason for dismissing his lawyers

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THERE have been a lot of speculations on why former President Erap dismissed his lawyers in the plunder and other cases against him.

Some say it was a calculated move to delay the trial. Others say he is trying to pressure the Sandiganbayan and the Macapagal administration to allow him to go to the United States. Others say he wants to counter unfavorable public opinion after his admission that he signed as Jose Velarde. And still others say he wants to appeal to the people's emotions.

A former national government official who knows Erap very well says that it can be all of the above.

***

Erap made a blunder when he said he signed bank accounts as Jose Velarde. What's worse, he didn't consult his lawyers before he made the admission. Even when he was still president, Erap was prone to making hasty decisions without thinking about the consequences, the ex-official said.

According to this former official, his lawyers probably blamed Erap for making that admission without consulting with them first.

Piqued at being blamed, Erap dismissed his lawyers.

***

Although he is prone to making rash moves, Erap is not brainless; in fact, he is a very clever person.

The former actor knows that he still has a big following among the *bakya* crowd, the group that composed the bulk of the electorate that sent him to Malacañang.

That's the same crowd that staged the unsuccessful "Edsa Tres." People in this group think that their hero is being oppressed and might take drastic moves to avenge him.

***

To this group belong movie fans who would throw rocks at the screen of a cinema that shows a movie where their hero dies.

There's even a joke about this type of moviegoers. One day when Erap was still a very popular actor, he visited a remote town in the Visayas.

As the simple townsfolk milled around Erap, somebody shouted from the crowd, "Joseph Estrada, Joseph Estrada!" Joseph Ejercito's screen name is Joseph Estrada. The screen name made him mayor, Vice President, and finally the President of the republic.

***

When Erap looked in the direction of where the shout was coming from, a man in tattered clothes asked him: "Don't you recognize me?"

Erap answered no, he didn't recognize the man. Whereupon the man shot back: "I was the one who shouted at you when Max Alvarado was about to shoot you in the back inside the church. If not for me, you have been dead by now."

"Thank you, *pare*," Erap said to humor the man.

***

The moral of the story is that there are fanatics among Erap's sympathizer who can't tell fact from fiction.

This is the group that nearly toppled the Macapagal administration, which was still in its infant stage in May, last year.

Erap will just say to his fans, "Please help me because I'm not having a fair trial," and they will come rampaging in the streets again like they did in May, last year.

***

If you think Erap is stupid for dismissing all his lawyers, think again.

Erap wants to project an underdog image to his followers.

"It would be folly for the government to treat it merely as a ploy to delay the cases," said Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel.

Pimentel, a keen political observer, added: "It is a move that if Estrada sustains to the very end of his trial could very well mean his legal conviction by the Sandiganbayan but, to his followers, a manifestation of his continuing oppression by the government."

The senator from Mindanao describes Erap's move as "a political masterstroke that President Macapagal-Arroyo has to counter masterfully."

***

It would do well for GMA to take Pimentel's warning to heart.

Otherwise, she would be faced again with a mindless, rampaging throng similar to the one at "Edsa Tres."

***

Erap will be staging a grand show in the next couple of weeks.

The venue is the Sandiganbayan courtroom.

He will allow himself to be taken to court but he will not have any defense lawyer talking for him. Erap has refused to see four lawyers from the Public Attorneys Office who were offered to him in place of his dismissed lawyers.

He will be doing a Ninoy Aquino who refused to be represented by counsel when he was tried by a military tribunal.

He will look *kawawa* to his fans.

LGU women in Diliman conference

SOME 150 women governors, mayors, councilors, and barangay officials from across the country are participating in the first Women in Local Governance Conference on Sustainable Development until March 6 at the PCED University Hostel in UP Diliman, Quezon City.

The three-day conference, sponsored by the Ugnayan ng Kababaihan sa Pulitika (UKP) and the Philippine NGO Beijing Scoreboard, is in preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development that will take place in Johannesburg, South Africa, Aug. 26 to Sept. 4, 2002.

Daphne D. Roxas, UKP executive director, said the conference focuses on gender equity, poverty alleviation, as well as good governance and public accountability in protecting the environment within the framework of sustainable development.

Child abuse raps vs Chavit brod

By Agnes E. Donato

ILOCOS SUR Vice Gov. Jeremias Singson, younger brother of whistleblower Luis "Chavit" Singson, is facing charges of abandonment and child abuse for allegedly failing to provide financial support for his two children by his former secretary.

Mary Ann Castillo, Singson's former secretary, filed the complaint after the vice governor allegedly stopped giving P40,000 in monthly financial support for their children, aged 7 and 2.

In her affidavit, Castillo said her affair with Singson began in 1988 when he was vice mayor of Vigan, Ilocos Sur and she was his secretary. She said their affair stopped when she left for Manila to work, and later for Abu Dhabi where she stayed until 1991, to avoid a scandal.

But she said Singson wooed her back in 1993 while she was working at the Allied Banking Corp. in Candon, Ilocos Sur. She said they had their first child in 1994, forcing her to resign from work.

Castillo said Singson would visit her and the baby twice or thrice a month during weekends at his house in Tandang Sora, Quezon City. In January 2000, another baby girl was born to the couple, Castillo said.

"(Singson) was a good provider to his second family and never failed to visit...during weekends," Castillo said in her affidavit.

But at the height of Juetengate, Singson's visit became scare, she said. He also completely stopped communicating with her and her children in November 2001, she said.

Despite her repeated oral and written demands, Singson failed to give her and their children any financial support, forcing her to rent a unit at Pangilinan Compound in Quezon City, she said.

Being jobless, Castillo claimed she even had to sell her personal properties to pay the rent, bills and daily expenses.

Mall security blamed for Ermita tourist robs

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE police chief of Ermita, Manila, Supt. Manolo Martinez, yesterday blamed the security setup at a mall in the district for the growing number of foreign tourists who fall prey to criminals.

Martinez noted that almost 80 percent of cases involving foreign tourists in his jurisdiction happened inside the popular mall Robinsons Place, bounded by Pedro Gil, M. Adriatico and Padre Faura streets.

The Western Police District has been hit in recent weeks by a rising number of tourists victimized by petty criminals. The 28-man Sta. Monica police-community-precinct was even relieved after a Saudi Arabian accused them of trying to rob him of $1,200.

But Martinez said that while he is trying his best to remove scalawags in his station and to go after petty criminals, he is not getting any positive response from the mall.

"Our records show that most of these incidents happened inside the food outlets in the mall," he said. "The Japanese are so trusting of people they just met."

He said he suggested that mall management display "in strategic locations inside the mall" the pictures of the thieves who were caught. But he said Robinsons Place did not agree because the mall did not want to frighten away customers.

He said mall officials told him they have the "best security force in the country."

He said the mall also does not turn over to police all the petty criminals caught inside Robinsons Place.

He claimed that mall management also ignored his suggestion that plainclothes policemen be allowed to patrol the mall.

"I even got two (complaint) letters from management when my men had their roll call formations along Padre Faura (Street) outside the mall," Martinez said. "They complained that the sight of uniformed policemen intimidated customers.

NBI . . .

From page A21

Medel, recanted his claim that Blanca's husband Rod Strunk was behind the killing.

Wycoco said the bureau already has a suspect in the case but he declined to give details.

He said the NBI is following up some leads that the CIDG first discovered.

"They (CIDG) stumbled on some correct leads," he said. "Our men also found leads that looked similar to those (found by the CIDG)."

He added that the bureau still does not have evidence to link Strunk to the murder. Strunk flew to the United States in January to be with his ailing mother, who has since died.

Nida was last seen alive around 5 p.m. on Nov. 6 as she was leaving the Movie Television Review and Classification Board office at the Atlanta Centre building in San Juan. She was found dead in her car at the building's car park early the next morning.

Nayon employees want ₱1M separation pay

By Christian V. Esguerra

EMPLOYEES of Nayong Pilipino are facing the dim prospect of permanently losing their jobs with the impending temporary closure of the theme park to pave the way for a multimillion-peso airport project.

"Definitely, not everybody will be employed" once the Nayong Pilipino reopens next year, park executive director Charito Planas told the Inquirer yesterday.

The theme park will be temporarily closed anytime soon to give way to the construction of the Terminal 3 project of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Fifty-nine permanent employees are pushing for more separation benefits from the Nayong Pilipino administration to cushion the effects of their job loss.

Planas said the employees are batting for P1 million in individual separation pay and continued medical allowance.

They also want to receive payment equivalent to a two-month salary for every year of service they spent with Nayong Pilipino, she added.

PLANAS

Planas said the theme park can only afford to give employees separation pay ranging from P35,000 to P500,000, depending on their total number of working years.

"I cannot give what the law does not provide," she pointed out. "Otherwise, I will be charged with graft."

She said that if it's any consolation, she has been conducting free seminars on livelihood and business to provide opportunities for employees who stand to lose their jobs at the Nayong Pilipino.

Planas said the Nayong Pilipino administration and the Manila International Airport Authority will determine the exact date of closure once a memorandum of agreement has been signed.

Both administrations are in a standoff, particularly on how much Miaa will pay for the 8.6-hectare property it secured from the theme park.

The property originally cost around P1 billion, but the Nayong Pilipino administration is asking for only P500 million, Planas said.

Miaa is pushing for P300 million, she said.

Trains kill 20 people each year, study says

By Alcuin Papa

AN AVERAGE of 20 people living alongside railroad tracks die every year due to train-related accidents in Metro Manila, according to the Philippine Medical Association.

In a study, the PMA also found out that most residents who live near Philippines National Railway (PNR) tracks suffer from hearing disabilities, among other health problems.

The PMA findings spurred the Makati City government to hold dialogues with residents of four barangays in the city to persuade them to voluntarily leave their shanties along the tracks and to move to the Pabahay project in Calauan, Laguna.

The relocation is mandated by President Macapagal-Arroyo's directive for the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) to relocate squatters residing within the PNR's right-of-way.

Around 2,000 families live near the tracks in Makati City. Barangay Magallanes has the most number of informal settlers—656 families—living near the PNR. Barangay San Antonio has 579 families, Pio del Pilar has 415, and Bangkal has 359.

In persuading these families to relocate to a safer place, the Makati City council plans to give the informal dwellers cash assistance of P30,000 per family.

The memorandum requires all government agencies, including the National Housing Authority and local government units, to coordinate with the HUDCC in providing alternative housing units, as well as extend the necessary assistance, to affected dwellers.

I have . . .

From page A21

The allegations say videoke bars with guest relations officers have been set up at the NBP's maximum security compound with the supposed blessing of prison officials.

Macala did admit that there are several videoke units at the maximum security compound, to provide additional "recreation" for inmates at the maximum security compound.

He said he ordered NBP superintendent Gregorio Agaloos to investigate the supposed irregularities.

Macala said the allegations were circulated by two prison officials who supposedly held a grudge against him - Supt. Rachel Ruelo and Alfredo Gozon, former superintendent of the Davao Penal Colony.

Macala invited his critics to "go to the NBP and see for (themselves) that there's no such thing as a special treatment" for wealthy inmates.

Munti cracks down on CD piracy

By Christian V. Esguerra

MUNTINLUPA authorities are gearing up for what could be another ugly confrontation with rowdy vendors occupying the Alabang viaduct area.

Local government authorities are on the alert after they started cracking down on vendors selling pirated music and video compact discs in the city.

City officials fear that the anti-piracy drive, conducted with members of the Videogram Regulatory Board (VRB), will agitate vendors who are selling mostly fake CDs and VCDs.

Vendors and the local government have a history of ugly confrontations, the most recent of which was the grenade attack on Montillano Extension in Alabang in January. The incident killed two children and injured at least 28 others.

Mayor Jaime Fresnedi has ordered key city hall departments to spearhead the anti-piracy drive in coordination with the VRB, according to public information officer Tez Valencia.

The Public Order and Safety Office, the Traffic Enforcement and Discipline unit, the Mayor's Security Group, and the local police will lead the departments, Valencia said.

"A local government unit has police power to confiscate pirated CDs and VCDs being sold by these unscrupulous vendors to protect the public and promote general welfare," Fresnedi said in a statement.

Yesterday, Muntinlupa and VRB officials destroyed about 8,000 pieces of fake CDs and VCDs confiscated in the Alabang viaduct area.

City officials consider the area "critical" since it is occupied by vendors who have consistently defied government campaigns to clean up the area.

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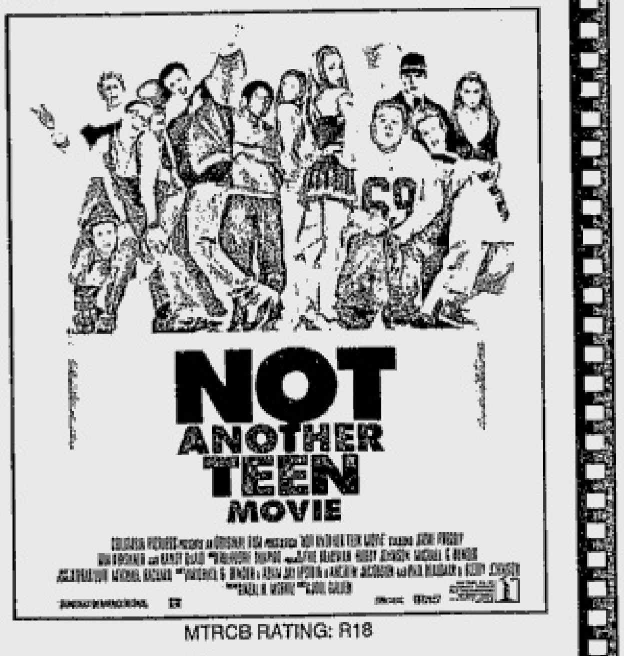

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2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	13 GHOST
4	SHALLOW HAL
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	IKAW LAMANG . . .
7	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
8	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
9	ALI
10	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
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1	IKAW LAMANG . . .
2	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
3	RAT RACE
4	ALI
5	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
7	13 GHOST
8	GOT 2 BELIEVE
9	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
11	HINOG SA PILIT
12	SHALLOW HAL

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	SHALLOW HAL
2	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
3	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4	13 GHOSTS
5	KATE & LEOPOLD
6	13 GHOSTS
7	GOT 2 BELIEVE
8	RAT RACE
9	GOT 2 BELIEVE
10	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
11	IKAW LAMANG . . .
12	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329491

1	BLACK HAWK DOWN
2	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
3	13 GHOST
4	ALI
5	SHALLOW HAL
6	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
7	RAT RACE
8	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
9	GOT 2 BELIEVE
10	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
11	GOT 2 BELIEVE
12	IKAW LAMANG . . .

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9285452

1	SHALLOW HAL
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	GOT 2 BELIVE
5	GOT 2 BELIVE
6	ALI
7	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
8	13 GHOSTS
9	CLOSED
10	CLOSED
11	CLOSED
12	CLOSED

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	SHALLOW HAL
3	ALI
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	RAT RACE
6	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
7	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
8	13 GHOSTS
9	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
10	GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CITY CEBU
2313878

1	THE OTHERS
2	FROM HELL
3	ALI
4	RIDING IN CARS . . .
5	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
7	GOT 2 BELIEVE
8	COLLATERAL DAMAGE

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	CORKY ROMANO
2	CLOSED
3	FROM HELL
4	IKAW LAMANG . . .
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE
7	CLOSED
8	COLLATERAL DAMAGE

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
2	PELIKULA AT LIPUNAN
3	FROM HELL
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
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1	13 GHOSTS
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	ALI

SM CINEMA GUADALUPE
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1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	ALI

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	13 GHOSTS
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	ALI

SM CITY DAVAO
2976990

1	FROM HELL
2	ALI
3	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
4	MARSHALL DICK
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	RIDING IN CARS

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1
2
3
4

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1
2
3
4

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4	GOT 2 BELIEVE

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2	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
3	ALI THX GUARANTEED SEATS
4	THE GOLDEN BOWL
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	13 GHOSTS
7	THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES

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2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	13 GHOSTS
4	THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
5	SHALLOW HAL

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4 GOLD (DTS)	SHALLOW HAL
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	RAT RACE
6 GOLD (SDDS)	13 GHOSTS
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	ALI
8	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
9	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	
3 (DTS)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	SHALLOW HAL
5	
6 (DTS)	
Golden Pearl THX	

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3274

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	13 GHOSTS
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	13 GHOSTS
5	HINOG SA PILIT

METROPOLIS star
tel 850.4285

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	HINOG SA PILIT
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	ALI
6	13 GHOSTS
7	RESERVE
8	RESERVE

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) TEL. 751-2010 TO 13

1	13 GHOSTS

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	IKAW LAMANG . . .
2	THE OTHERS

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1	RESERVE
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
A	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8568

1 (DOLBY)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	
3	
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
7 (DTS)	SHALLOW HAL
8 (SDDS)	13 GHOSTS
9 (DOLBY)	ALI

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4 (SDDS)	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 (DOLBY)	ALI
7 (DTS)	13 GHOSTS
8	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
9	HINOG SA PILIT

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 (SDDS)	13 GHOSTS
6	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
7 (DOLBY)	ALI
8	HINOG SA PILIT

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	13 GHOSTS
4	ALI
5 (SDDS)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson Lords Jennet	DARK DANCER GOT 2 BELIEVE

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	13 GHOSTS

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	13 GHOSTS
3	RESERVE
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	ALI

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	13 GHOSTS
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	HINOG SA PILIT

FRC Cinema
Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	HUSTLER

Berma
tel 879.2029

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	GOT 2 BELIVE
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 (DTS)	13 GHOSTS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	ALI
2 (DTS)	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DOLBY)	13 GHOSTS
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DOLBY)	13 GHOSTS
3 (DTS)	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 (DOLBY)	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4 (DTS)	FROM HELL

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4 (DTS)	13 GHOSTS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	13 GHOSTS
4	HINOG SA PILIT
5	ALI

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	13 GHOSTS

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1	13 GHOSTS
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	KAULAYAW

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DTS)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	HINOG SA PILIT
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	FROM HELL
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY SR)	DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	BATAS NG LANSANAGAN
4	BATAS NG LANSANAGAN

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

CMG INTERNATIONAL
Mile Long Compound, Amorsolo cor. Dela Rosa St., Makati City
E-Mail: premierethx@asia.com
For VIP, Gold, Silver membership
For reservations, call: 751-2010 to 13

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THIR13EN GHOSTS

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS

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galleria
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1 THX	SHALLOW HAL
2	ALI
3	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	13 GHOSTS
7	RAT RACE
8	VANILLA SKY
9	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10	

ermita
536-7809 to12

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	ALI
3	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4	13 GHOSTS
5	SHALLOW HAL
6	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
7	

metro east -PASIG
682-8193 / 8080

1	SHALLOW HAL
2	13 GHOSTS
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	ALI
5	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
6	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
7	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
8	

novaliches
935-2899 to 30

1	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2	RAT RACE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	ALI
5	SHALLOW HAL
6	IKAW LAMANG . . .
7	GOT 2 BELIEVE
8	

imus
(046) 471-8168

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	ALI
4	13 GHOSTS
5	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6	

bacolod
(034) 441-0453 /0459

1	KATE & LEOPOLD
2	THE OTHERS
3	IKAW LAMANG . . .
4	VANILLA SKY
5	HEARTS IN ATLANTIS
6	

iloilo
(033) 336-8077 /8078

1	FROM HELL
2	CORKY ROMANO
3	DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	KATE & LEOPOLD
6	

star mills- San Fernando, PAMPANGA

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	FROM HELL
6	FROM HELL

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call-a-movie 536- 7812

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Larusso interviewed by No. 1 fan

From ppage A24

I go for lyrics first. How can I sing something soulfully if I don't feel the words? That's why when I record in English and practice, I have a dictionary beside me so I can look up the meaning of the words I don't understand. I learned English just by self-study.

Which of your songs is closest to your heart?

It's song No. 7 in my second album, "Quoiqu'ils pensent" ("Whatever They Think"). It's about respecting homosexuals and lesbians. I believe that love should be open to all. We have no right to judge people for their sexual preferences.

And which song best describes you?

Song No. 9 in my second album, "J'attends tout" ("I long for all"). Just like what the song says, I can live without money but not without love. I don't go for material stuff. As long as someone is always there for me when I need him, then I'm happy.

Do you have a boyfriend right now?

(Giggles) Yeah! He's French. Too bad he was not kind enough to join me here. Maybe next time.

Any crushes?

My friends are crazy about **Brad Pitt** but I don't like Brad Pitt, although I know he loves me (laughter). I love **George Clooney**. I know his French ex. She's not that pretty (laughter).

Any funny or embarrassing moments?

Back in school, I don't know why but my music teacher hated me. She would let everyone play the xylophone except me and when I would ask her why, she said, "I don't love you." Fine by me! She looked like a witch (laughter). I wanted to cut her big pointed nose off. If she could only see me now, huh?

Also, when I was still with a band that sang during weddings, my skirt got ripped off while I was dancing and my butt was showing but I just kept smiling and waving as if nothing happened.

Is there anything you would want to change in yourself?

I can be too frank sometimes. I always say what I mean and mean what I say. If a person does not like me, then I don't like him, too, but if he loves me then I will love him forever. But in this business, that can sometimes cause you trouble. People expect you to always be nice and smiling. I find it hard to fake what I feel. If I don't like someone or I can sense that someone is lying to me, it shows.

If you were not a singer, what would you be?

Nothing, I guess. I live to sing.

The Larusso Philippine promo tour was sponsored by Mossimo, Joey 92.3 and Skechers Sport with the support of the French Embassy and Alliance Francaise.

For feedback, e-mail *friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com* or *wateringhole2000@yahoo.com*

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	ALI
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	13 GHOST
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	SHALLOW HAL
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	GOT 2 BELIEVE
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	HINOG SA PILIT
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ODEON-2	13 GHOST
ROBEN	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE / AMERICAN PIE 2
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
REMAR	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
REMAR-2	HINOG SA PILIT
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
B	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	RAT RACE
CINEMA-2	13 GHOST
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-6401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	REBULOSYONARYO
CINEMA-2	HALIK SA AKING LUPA
CINEMA-3	MARSHALL DICK
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	FROM HELL
CINEMA-6	KATE & LEOPOLD
CINEMA-7	IKAW LANG HANGGANG NGAYON
CINEMA-8	KUNG IKAW AY ISANG PANAGINIP
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	RIDING CARS w/ BOYS
CINEMA-12	VANILLA SKY
CINEMA-14	IKAW LANG HANGGANG NGAYON
CINEMA-15	IKAW LANG HANGGANG NGAYON
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	RAT RACE
CINEMA-2	13 GHOST
CINEMA-3	SHALLOW HAL
CINEMA-4	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
CINEMA-5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-6	ALI
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

RELAX AND SEE A MOVIE

THEATRE MALL
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CINEMA 1: SHALLOW HAL 12:10 / 2:35 / 5:00 / 7:25 / 9:50 P 13
CINEMA 2: THIRTEEN GHOST 12:50 / 3:05 / 5:20 / 7:35 / 10:00 R 18
Matinee: P80.00 - Screenings before 5:00pm, Monday thru Friday (Free Seating).
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March 9, 2002 ROCK AGAINST PIRACY
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL:

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41

RAT RACE - GP 12:10, 2:35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:50	13 GHOST - R 18 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00	SHALLOW HAL - P 13 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
MOTHMAN PROPHECIES - P 13 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40	GOT 2 BELIEVE 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45	ALI - P13 12:40, 3:50, 7:00, 10:10

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri..11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
8 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS including
BEST PICTURE
BEST ACTOR Russell Crowe
BEST DIRECTOR Ron Howard
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS Jennifer Connelly
BEST SCREENPLAY Akiva Goldsman
4 WINNER GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS
BEST PICTURE
BEST ACTOR
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
BEST SCREENPLAY
RUSSELL CROWE
A BEAUTIFUL MIND
ED HARRIS
united international pictures
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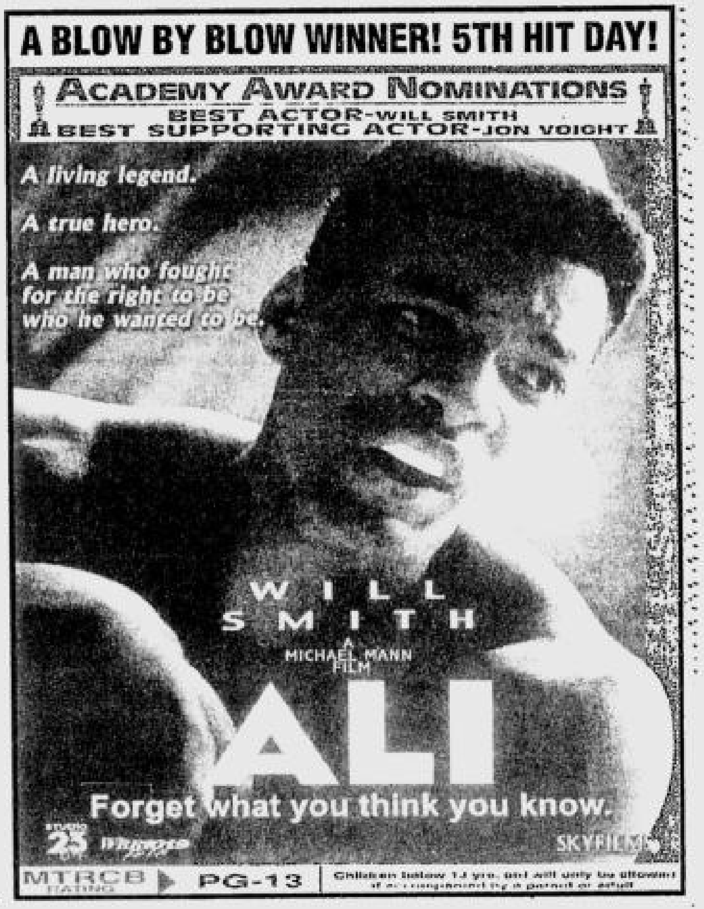
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ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS
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BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR-JON VOIGHT
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A true hero.
A man who fought for the right to be who he wanted to be.
WILL SMITH
A MICHAEL MANN FILM
ALI
Forget what you think you know.
SKYFILMS
MTRCB RATING PG-13

AYALA CINEMAS
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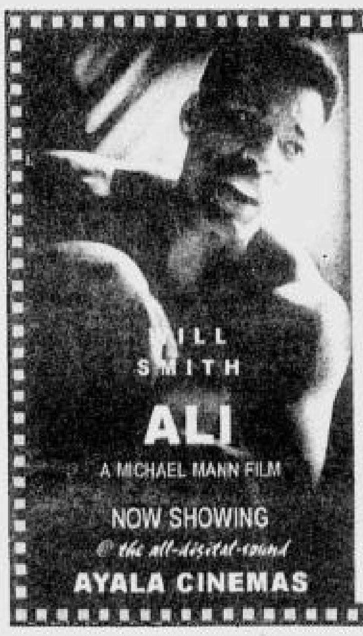
SALSA!
A Film By JoyceSherman Buñuel
At age 24, Rémi Bonnet, brilliant pianist, abandons Chopin and Toulouse to play the music he has secretly loved for years - Salsa! He heads for Paris, the salsa capital of Europe, only to discover to his great surprise, that nobody wants a white boy in Latin band! Felipe, his Cuban friend, sets him straight: " You don't have the Latino look, muchacho! Today, if your are not Cubano or Columbiano, you are out!". Undaunted, Rémi deliberately takes on the identity, accent and complexion of an unemployed alien in a city where most foreigners will do almost anything to become French. Barreto, 75, the legendary Cuban composer, who is about to close down the once famous Casa Cubana, offers Rémi a job giving dance lessons to the locals. It is here that Rémi falls in love with Nathalie. Her family's "secrets and lies" reveal parental links to Barreto. Do these links explain why this shy beauty ought to be a bomb on the dance floor?
WINNER!
Best Feature - Avignon/New York Film Festival
A French Film with English Subtitles
NOKIA
Tobacco Corporation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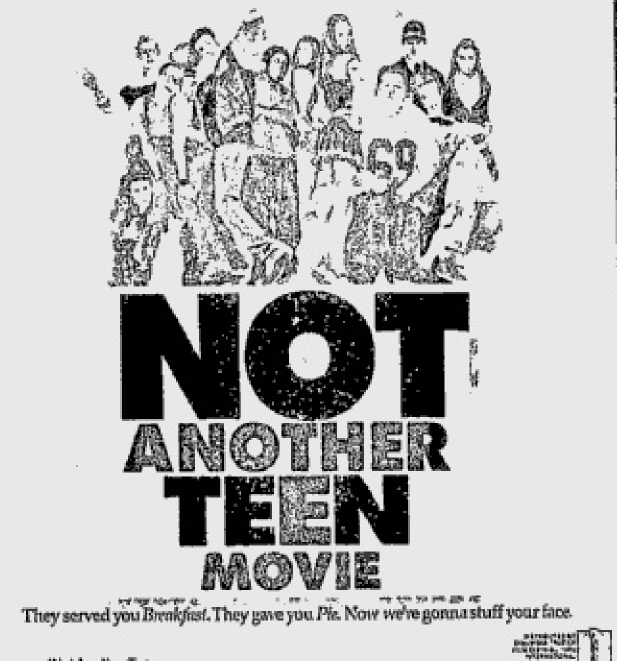
A boldly conceived and intricately plotted drama of love, loss, retribution and redemption, AMORES PERROS has already been hailed by the NEW YORK TIMES as "the first classic of the new decade." Ever since its acclaimed and award-winning world premiere at Cannes, this directorial debut by Alejandro González Iñárritu has made a sensation on the international film festival circuit, where it has been praised as a film of outstanding power, originality, and raw beauty. It has also won a stunning array of prizes from both juries and audiences alike, proclaiming not only its impressive artistic achievements, but also its undeniable and visceral power to excite people in new and unexpected ways.
AMORES PERROS raises provocative questions about the human condition at the same time that the film daringly recapitulates and reinvents different styles of Latin cinema. The result is a vivid and intricate mosaic of classic themes rendered in original -- and unforgettable ways.
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R)
NOKIA SKYFILMS INQUIRER


Hot Date Movie! Not for Desperate Virgins Only!
SPICY SPOOF of SEX TEEN COMEDIES STARTS TOMORROW!
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sony.com/NotAnotherTeen
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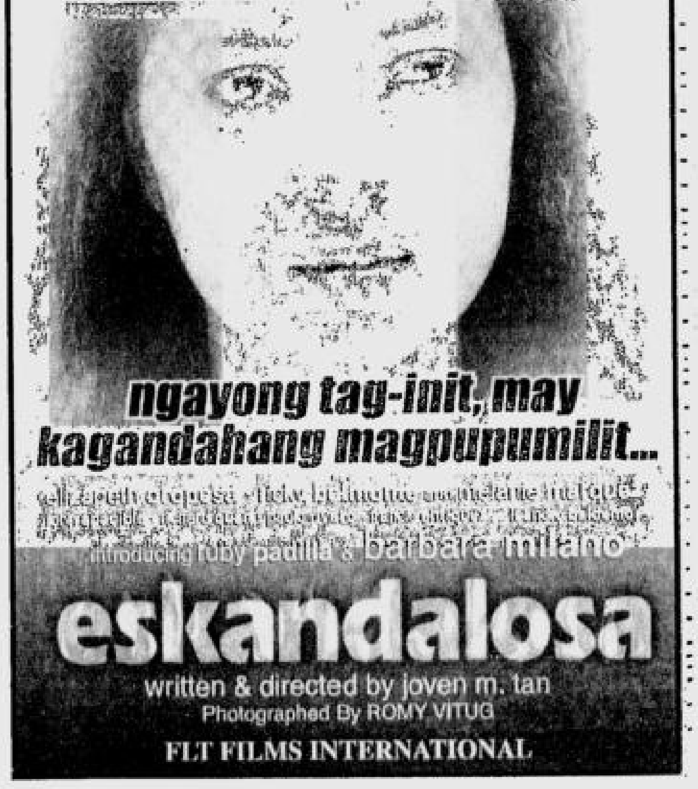
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OPENS TOMORROW !
ngayong tag-init, may kagandahang magpupumilit...
introducing ruby padilla & barbara milano
eskandalosa
written & directed by joven m. tan
Photographed By ROMY VITUG
FLT FILMS INTERNATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

‘Pirate me’?

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE FIRST time we heard about it, some two months back, we rejected the rumor out of hand. But we kept getting different versions of the same report in succeeding weeks, so based on the tested show biz principle, "Where there's smoke, there's fire," we decided to ask some of the entertainment industry's prime movers if there was any truth to the rumor. We got an earfull.

We're talking about the rumor that show biz piracy, specifically in the recording and movie fields, is being perpetrated not just by people outside the industry, but in some cases also by industry people themselves.

Even more specifically by record producers and movie people who "private" their own works!

Initially, this appears to make no sense at all. Why in the world would a producer make bogus and cheaper copies of his own products? That world be like competing against himself, so where's the logic or profit in that?

But it was carefully explained to us that the strange practice could make sense, in this wise: In the recording field, the "pirated disc" market has become so big that it can no longer be ignored. And the problem can't seem to be licked, even after many raids, etc.

So, following that other principle, "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em," a few record producers have reportedly produced "pirated" versions of their own CDs.

But, won't this reduce their income from legit business?

The response we got was: Their legit business is down, anyway, so rather than the pirates making all of the colorum money, a few record producers going the "pirate me" route can at least get some of that colorum income. Can you follow that logic?

In a sense, it's similar to the "kidnap me" cases that we hear about from time to time: some people get themselves "kidnapped" so they can get a share of the ransom that their relatives pay. Weird, but it happens.

What about in the movies? Here, we get mostly rumors, no real verification. Some of our sources say that the same thing could happen among the smaller producers, but nothing more verifiable than that—at least, not yet.

But our sources do point out that film piracy couldn't work without the collusion of at least some movie people, not the producers. For instance, if a film is taped for piracy while it's showing in a moviehouse, how could the "pirate videographer" be able to shoot in the theater without the cooperation of some security guard or usher?

And, if a film is pirated while it is still being edited or processed in the post-production labs, how could this be accomplished without the help of some of the personnel involved?

Highlights on Cinema One

CINEMA One's movie highlights for March include:

On Wednesday Winners every 8 p.m.—March 6, "Nasaan ang Puso," with **Maricel Soriano** and **Christopher de Leon**. March 13, "Bata, Bata, Paano Ka Ginawa?" with **Vilma Santos**. March 20, "Buhay ng Buhay Ko" with **Dawn Zulueta**. March 27, **Sharon Cuneta** in "Madrasta."

Friday Action every 8 p.m. features the movies of **Rudy Fernandez**—March 8, "Ayaw Matuloy ng Gabi" with **Lorna Tolentino**. March 15, "Ping Lacson, Supercop" again with Lorna. March 22, "Birador" with **Donita Rose**.

Rico Yan's starrers are featured in Pop Theater from March 11 to 15 at 12 noon (replays from March 18 to 22 at 10:45 p.m.). March 11, "Flames, The Movie." March 12, "Mula sa Puso." March 13, "Radio Romance." March 14, "Paano ang Puso Ko." March 15, "Gimik, The Reunion."

Cinema One's Holy Week presentations start on March 29, Good Friday, with "Kristo" at 8 a.m. Other features—at 10 a.m., "Cain At Abel." At 12 noon, "Ingkong—Alpha at Omega." At 2 p.m., "Divine Mercy sa Buhay ni Sister Faustina." At 4 p.m., "Himala" with **Nora Aunor**. At 6 p.m., "Misteryo sa Tuwa." At 8 p.m., "Ama Namin." At 10:45 p.m., "Itim."

Take particular note of: "Bata, Bata, Paano Ka Ginawa," "Madrasta," "Himala," "Misteryo sa Tuwa" and "Itim."

‘Out There with Toyota’ on NGC

LEARN more about the environment by viewing the new series on the National Geographic Channel: "Out There (Adventure Starts Here) with Toyota" at 9 p.m. on March 6.

Join eco-adventurer **Hayden Turner** as he lives his dream: the ultimate camel trek through the Western Sahara, starting in the foothills of the lower Atlas Mountains of Morocco and down an ancient Saharan Trade Route.

Along the way, Hayden gains further insights into the desert nomads' way of life, and the special bond they form with their camels as they journey through one of the harshest landscapes on earth.

The National Geographic Channel can be viewed on Destiny Cable, Las Piñas Cable, Parañaque Cable and the DTH Dream Broadcasting Service.

‘Grosse Pointe’

AT 8 p.m. every Sunday Studio 23 airs the new sitcom, "Gross Pointe." The show is about the on—and—offscreen misadventures of six young actors in a top-rated primetime soap. The characters and the actors who play them:

Hunter Fallow (**Irene Molloy**) plays Becky Johnson, sweet to fans but a sexpot diva when the director yells, "Cut!" Her best friend is Marcy Sternfeld (**Lindsay Sloane**), whose insecurities make her the perfect patsy for Hunter's control-freak nature.

Trained in the theater, courtney Bennet (**Bonnie Sommerville**) can't seem to get the hang of the biz, but she does understand money, which is why she's playing Becky's orphaned cousin Laura.

As Becky's brother, Johnny Lane (**Al Santos**) gets into character by surfing and entertaining extras in his trailer. Every 13-year-old's dream, Quentin King (**Kohl Sudduth**) is only too eager to graduate from his juvenile role as Becky's rebel boyfriend, Stone Anders. He's certainly got the hair for it—or should we say hairpiece?

Finally, Dave May (**Kyle Howard**) is an aspiring actor forced to take on bit parts and stand-in assignments. And Rob Fields (**William Ragsdale**) and Hope Lustig (**Joely Fisher**) experience dramas of their own as the TV soap's eccentric executive producers.

Josh Hartnett rises in ‘Black Hawk Down’

By Ruben V. Nepales

HARTNETT

LOS ANGELES—Josh Hartnett survived the scathing reviews and media circus that greeted "Pearl Harbor." Despite the terrible notices of the $135-million World War II epic, Hartnett also became Hollywood's newest star.

And now, to top it all, the 23-year-old actor is riding the acclaim of a new war movie he stars in, Ridley Scott's "Black Hawk Down." In a glowing three-page review, Time magazine (Dec. 17, 2000 issue) added "Black Hawk Down" to "the very short list of the unforgettable movies about war."

Los Angeles Daily News also trotted out superlatives in its review and declared, "The best war film since 'Saving Private Ryan,' 'Black Hawk Down' is also a new kind of military movie for a new century of combat." The movie has also earned four Oscar nominations for best director, cinematography, editing and sound.

Hartnett, the guy who stands to benefit the most from all this buzz, sits calmly for an afternoon interview with six journalists in a hotel room. Soft-spoken, he is a bit hoarse so one has to lean closer to follow his comments.

His brooding good looks come from those deep-set eyes and thick eyebrows.

In "Black Hawk Down," the 6-foot-3 actor plays a composite of real US Rangers, those members of an elite US Army unit, who took part in a military operation in Mogadishu, Somalia on Oct. 3, 1993.

Intense

Hartnett describes the actors' training for "Pearl Harbor" as typical Hollywood boot camp. In contrast, the large cast of "Black Hawk Down," which includes "Moulin Rouge" star Ewan McGregor, Sizemore, Eric Bana (who will be playing the title role in Ang Lee's movie adaptation of "The Incredible Hulk"), Sam Shepard (also a Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright) and Jason Isaacs (the acclaimed villain in "The Patriot"), trained at the actual military sites of the branches they were portraying.

Filming in Morocco offered Hartnett one unexpected benefit: He escaped the media hype that trumpeted the release of "Pearl Harbor." He says, "When all of the stuff hit (barrage of magazine covers and so on), I was in Morocco so I didn't really have to deal with it. I didn't see any of the hype when the movie came out. The only thing that I saw was the premiere which was quite spectacular. It was huge. But after that, I went back to Morocco so I missed quite a bit of it. I went back to a place where nobody knew who I was. I was just another white man."

Except in nearby Spain, where the cast and crew escaped to on off days. Even with a hat pulled down on his head, Hartnett was not just another white man in Madrid and Barcelona. Attempting to see Picassos in museums with his friends, Hartnett was recognized and hounded by mobs of girls. "I ran for my life," he quips with a rueful smile.

Grounded

He gets the same adulation from girls in other parts of the world as well. Can he still go out like any other person? "I can, except it's stupid to go to places where they're having field trips for 13-year-old girls," he laughs. "That's my own idiocy."

Since "Black Hawk Down" is his first movie as the lead actor, does he feel any pressure to carry the film? "No," is his quick answer. "Because it's a true to life story. It is ensemble acting. It's not about star wattage. It's not about giving that pearly smile."

Hartnett swiftly rose, considering that "Black Hawk Down" is only his tenth film. Among his other films are Sofia Coppola's acclaimed indie "The Virgin Suicides" (he played a seducer); "O," the urban retelling of Shakespearear's "Othello" (he earned raves for his Hugo, the scheming modern-day Iago) and the upcoming "40 Days, 40 Nights," in which he swears off sex for Lent, then meets an irresistible girl.

In response to the big-head question, he is firm. "I've got a good family and friends who keep me grounded. Tom (Sizemore) was asked by the New York Times about me and what I was like, whether I thought I was the new 'It' boy. He said, what does that mean, are we going to punish him because he's good looking? Is he not an actor?

Larusso interviewed by No. 1 fan

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

LARUSSO with her No. 1 fans, your Dollywood columnist and Allana Lopez Montelibano.

SINCE I grew up in show biz, I hardly get star-struck. But when I met Larusso face to face, I suddenly turned into a fan.

My best friend **Allana Lopez Montelibano** joined me because she adores Larusso as much as I do. For a "frustrated" French-woman like me, getting to talk to the French singer was like being in a dream. It brought back memories of my student days in Paris. I was almost tempted to ask Larusso if I could be her interpreter.

She instantly dispelled the notion of the French being snooty. As one reporter remarked, "She's like **Osang (Rosanna Roces)** and **Maricel Soriano** combined." Larusso truly spoke very candidly and had no prima donna airs at all.

What a thrill it was when I handed her my two English translations of her phenomenal hit "On Ne S'aimera PLus Jamais (which I printed in this column) and she started singing it using my words. "This is fantastic," she said. "I should record this." Right there and then I wanted to faint!

Surprisingly, she speaks English rather well. Here are some of the highlights of my up close and personal encounter with the latest French sensation.

Why Larusso?

My real name is Laetitia Serrero. I hate my name so I chose to be called Larusso which means ginger or red-head. I've always been a little redhead with green eyes and a big heart who lives exclusively for the music.

Did you ever think that "On Ne S'aimera Plus Jamais" would be such a big hit even outside France?

When I sing, I do it because I love to sing. I don't think in terms of hit records or album sales. I was a bit surprised though when they called me to come here to the Philippines. I said, why me? There are a lot of other more famous French singers. But wherever people love my music I will go.

How were you discovered?

By accident. There was this girl they wanted me to teach how to sing "I Will Survive" before she recorded it so I went to the studio. It turned out that the producers liked me, so instead of hiring the other girl they got me.

Aren't you planning to record an all-English album?

Funny thing is, I used to hate singing in French. I would prefer singing English songs. You know how it is, you grow up hearing the same sort of music so you kind of get sick of it. One day, my father gave me a tape of **Tracy Chapman**. I loved it so I threw all my French tapes and started singing in English.

"On Ne S'aimera Plus Jamais" ("We will Never Love Each other again") is a goodbye song. Were you ever broken-hearted?

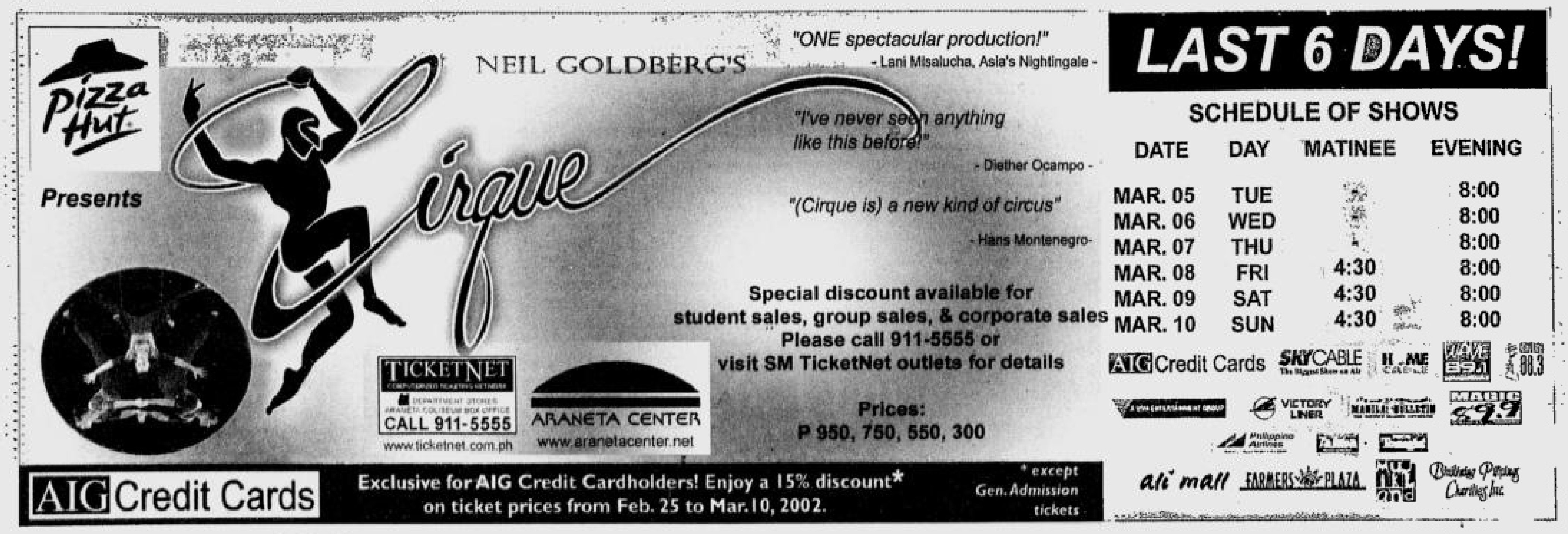
Oh yeah! That's why I sing sad songs. I'm the doctor! But my sad songs are not your typical sad songs. I want to convey that women should not sulk and cry. They should have hope in their hearts and strength to carry on. None of the wimpy types. That's why even when "On Ne S'aimera Plus Jamais" marks the end of a love affair, it still has a happy tune. After an ending, there's another beginning.

How French are you?

I'm not the typical French girl. I also have Moroccan influence because that's where my dad is from. My mom is like my shadow. She's with me wherever I go. She chooses my clothes, my everything.

What's more important to you, the lyrics or the melody?

LARUSSO/ A23



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MAR. 09	SAT	4:30	8:00
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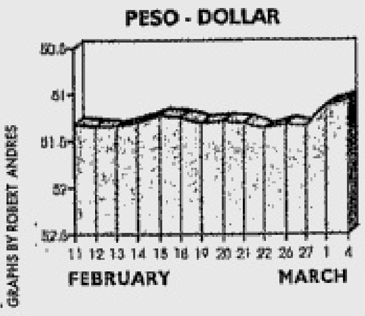

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As of 5 p.m., March 4, 2002

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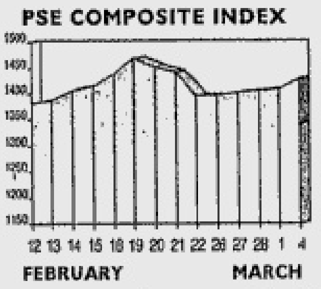
STOCK MARKET

Shares end up 1.3%

SHARES finished higher yesterday, buoyed by a fresh round of domestic and overseas economic data, which gave more credence to expectations of a better economic outlook this year, traders said.



(See stock market report on Page B4)

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 18.93 points, or 1.3 percent, at 1429.35, adding to Friday's 0.3-percent gain.

The market was bolstered in part by the latest US data, which showed strong gains in new orders for manufactured goods, said Westlink Global Equities research manager Joseph James Lago.

The data outpaced economists' expectation and represented the first time the US manufacturing sector showed an expansion in 18 months.

The US data boosted the Dow Jones Industrial Average 2.6 percent, while the Nasdaq Composite Index gained 4.1 percent last Friday. *AP*

By Doris C. Dumlao

A CONSORTIUM led by businessman Carlos Rufino and premier property developer Megaworld Corp. has closed a P2.5-billion deal with Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. to acquire a 5-hectare property that will be developed into a mixed-use complex similar to the Eastwood City in Libis.

The INQUIRER earlier reported that Megaworld would invest up to P12 billion within the next two to three years in the joint venture with Rufino, whose company, Bonifacio West Development Corp., purchased the lot for mixed residential and commercial development.

In an interview yesterday, Rufino, the president of Bonifacio West and a former senior vice president of FBDC, said the consortium was composed of Filipino-Chinese businessmen and confirmed that Megaworld would come in as a joint-venture partner. He said the project would be developed within the next eight to 12 years.

It would be the first foray of Andrew Tan's flagship unit into the 150-ha Fort Bonifacio Global City. Company sources earlier said Megaworld planned to put up 12 to 15 residential towers within the property.

The 5-ha property occupies a prime location with a view of the fairways of the plush Manila Golf and Country Club, in the southwest portion of the Bonifacio Global City, which is home to other upscale residential addresses like Pacific Plaza Towers and Essensa.

FBDC chief finance officer Jose Ma. Lim said that given a highly challenging economic climate and the continued weakness of the Philippine property sector, a significant take-up of property in the Bonifacio Global City was a sign that developers were preparing for better times ahead.

"Every real estate development has faced setbacks, and given the economic crisis of recent years, transactions such as this one are clear signs of faith in the Bonifacio Global City," Lim said.

"We expect continued interest from individual developers specially as we move from a period where we were largely focused on building our city's infrastructure to a period where vertical development will be our primary thrust," he added.

FBDC is a joint venture between the Metro Pacific-led consortium Bonifacio Land Co. and state-controlled Bases Conversion Development Authority.

Rufino said the acquiring consortium would undertake residential and commercial projects, including a series of multi-story residential buildings that would benefit from "Central Park-like views," including a restaurant and entertainment complex like Eastwood City.

Rufino is also part of an Ayala-led consortium that had offered to buy Metro Pacific Corp.'s 69.6-percent stake in BLC that was put on the block following the property slump precipitated by the 1997 Asian financial crisis. MPC, however, has yet to find an acceptable offer for the controlling stake in BLC and decided instead to put up loss provisions for the investments in Fort Bonifacio.

Meanwhile, Megaworld, whose crown jewel is the 15-ha Eastwood City, is a pioneer in cyberpark development and one of the leading players in the local property industry. Megaworld itself concentrates on the upscale market while subsidiary Empire East Land Holdings Inc. focuses on the middle-income market. A fairly new subsidiary, Fairmont Holdings Inc., is being groomed as a mass housing arm.

MRTC affirms support for Edsa rail project

By Abigail L. Ho

METRO Rail Transit Corp. yesterday affirmed its support for the Edsa Metro Rail Transit-3 project and maintained that all proceeds of the $170-million asset-backed securitization deal it is currently negotiating will go to the Edsa MRT-3 extension project.

In an interview yesterday, MRTC spokesperson Paul Daza said the group was not even remotely considering the possibility of bailing out of the project.

"We're even trying to fast-track discussions with the (Department of Transportation and Communications) for Phase 2 so we could start implementation as soon as possible," he said.

The INQUIRER earlier reported that the group was coaxing the government to engage in an asset transfer that would mean zero involvement in the railway system for the consortium.

Daza belied this and said it was actually the government that approached MRTC last year for a possible asset transfer and that this would not have anything to do with the consortium's debts.

"There are two components to the project—the debt to foreign lenders and the government's payment to us. The potential sale has nothing to do with our debts. It only has to do with the payment

MRTC/ B4

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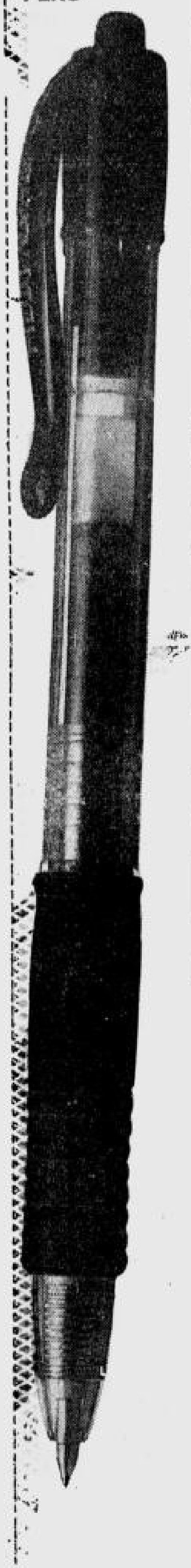

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Gov't planning new water commission

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT is planning to overhaul its regulatory framework for pricing raw water to rationalize the nationwide allocation of dwindling water supply, top officials of the National Economic and Development Authority said yesterday.

The proposal is to segregate the economic and financial regulation of raw water through the creation of a new agency called the "Water Regulatory Commission," while resource and technical administration will remain with the existing National Water Resources Board (NWRB),

In a news briefing, Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas said the government would hold a "water summit" on March 22 to address various concerns on the management of bulk, or raw, water, which is used for irrigation, community water supply, industrial and hydropower activities.

"Increased water demand brought by rapid population growth and industrialization has created the need to manage and allocate water more efficiently," Canlas said.

"Given the finite amount of renewable freshwater resources available in the country, water supply shortages are already becoming a constraint to economic development and social well-being," he said.

Malacañang order violates WTO rules, meat firms warn

MEAT product importers and at least four meat-exporting countries have asked the Macapagal administration to reconsider its plan to issue an order that they insist smacks of protectionism.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is set to issue Administrative Order 25 requiring meat importers and exporters to secure "food safety and chain of custody compliance certificates" issued by inspection firms like Societe Generale d'Surveillance.

The Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc. and the governments of Australia, the United States, Belgium and the Netherlands warned that this order could be considered a trade barrier that would violate rules set by the World Trade Organization.

Belgian Economic and Commercial Attaché Marc Devriendt said in an interview that should the Philippine government push ahead with its plan, it would risk facing a case before the WTO.

Devriendt said Manila should first consult with its trading partners before issuing the order.

AO 25 was signed in December after a series of consultations with the affected sectors.

Devriendt said requiring meat-producing countries to secure the services of an inspection agency suggested that the Philippines had "no confidence on the inspection and safety measures being undertaken by our respective countries."

Christine A. Gaylican

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Ruling crass

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THIS is not the first time I hear a mysterious voice coming from somebody I cannot even see, although I am proud to say that I'm not startled at all.

And it's not even because I am no longer a kid—I am already a grown man—but it's mainly because we are actually talking over the telephone.

The mysterious voice comes from Felicito Payumo, who has a fixed-term as chair and administrator of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, or SBMA.

The "authority," whatever it means, is hitting the headlines again, meaning, it is entangled in a controversy, courtesy of this cute administration.

It is in Subic where a lot of used vehicles are imported from Japan. It is now such a huge business that local carmakers complain directly to Gloriaetta that they're hurting.

It is also in Subic where the steering wheels of the vehicles have to be moved to the left side. Well, in Japan, as everybody knows, they drive on the wrong side of the road.

* * *

IN our telephone conversation, Tom Payumo does not deny that a lot of importation of used—and might I add "old"—SUVs and vans is done in Subic.

He insists that he thinks the importation is perfectly legal. As proof of its legality, he points out that it is all done openly.

Well, it is proof that he, and perhaps all those importers in Subic, may think it is all legal. It is nevertheless possible that they are, to put it mildly, wrong.

That a thing is done openly, if you ask me, does not make it legal. Look, all the drug addicts take hits openly. They misbehave openly, too.

Still, Tom tells me that if, after all the importation of thousands of vehicles, it is in fact illegal, and there's a definitive ruling on it, he will stop it.

This is not the first time somebody tells me what he does is perfectly legal, as far as he knows, although if he's wrong, he will follow what's legal. Does he have any choice?

* * *

EARLIER Trade Secretary Mar Roxas has told me he believes that the importation of those used vehicles is illegal, whether in Subic or in Takurong.

He cited only three exceptions to the rule, and the vehicles sold through the popular auction system in Subic, Malinta and Valenzuela do not fall under any of them.

Tom now says he believes otherwise. He says existing laws, executive orders and directives from the Office of the President allow the importation.

So now it is a question of legality. And, of course, we all know how, in this country, we decide such a baffling question. It takes a long time! Also, a lot of money.

To think, it is the only way for this cute administration to stop the importation. That it is illegal. That it is, in fact, a crime. That somebody even ought to go to jail.

Otherwise, the importers can claim that this cute administration is only favoring the carmakers, i.e., the ruling class, and they happen to be all owned by foreigners.

* * *

NOW, to me, the legality of the importation is just one aspect of the issue. Come on, let's not be naive. We all know that the legality or illegality of anything can be manipulated.

Somebody may give a definitive ruling that it's either legal or illegal, sure. But if it's clearly as crass an activity as this used vehicle importation, who the freak really cares?

Let's talk about safety, for instance. Tom himself tackles the issue. So are those "converted" vehicles really safe? Tom says that they are.

For instance, he notes that the SBMA itself has a so-called safety inspection team, which regularly checks the "quality and roadworthiness" of the vehicles. Hmm.

I'm not exactly sure how a ragtag "team" can do that since the safety of vehicles is a hi-tech matter, but I am sure that a mere ocular inspection does not suffice.

Tom also notes that the Land Transportation Office even registers the vehicles. Meaning, if they are not safe, will the LTO do that? You want my honest opinion, boss?

* * *

THE ONLY thing is, I found out that a single LTO branch, somewhere in Quezon City, registers a lot of the vehicles sold through the Valenzuela and Malinta auctions.

If that particular LTO agency really has the time to check the "safety" of all those thousands of vehicles, assuming it even bothers, my admiration goes to it.

But how come it "registers" even the vans whose doors are located at the wrong side, meaning, the driver's side, on the left, which is actually the passenger side in Japan?

Meaning, further, that if you use those vans here in the Philippines, the passengers can only use the doors on the street side where traffic is rushing like mad. That's safe?

I also have a friend who, unfortunately, was lured into buying a used SUV in the auction, thinking all SUVs are just the same, once they are . . . well, "converted."

One time, he almost hit the wall by the ramp of the parking building in the mall because the "converted" steering wheel just would not turn far enough. Very safe indeed!

* * *

THAT everything is fine, since the LTO registers the vehicles and the Bureau of Customs even accepts payment of duties and taxes, precisely, is begging the question.

The question is this: Why are the LTO and customs bureau even doing it? How come it is even possible to register "converted" vans whose doors are on the street side?

If, by the mere fact that the customs bureau accepts payment of duties and taxes, everything is fine, can anybody, not just those "converters" in Subic, now bring in used SUVs?

So why do we even bother to buy from them? We just buy used SUVs in the United States, ship them here, and we don't even have to, ahh, "convert" them.

But I agree with Tom. He tells me that this is a case of the left hand of the government not knowing what the right hand is doing.

That's why he wants the LTO, Customs and the DTI to put their acts together, and that's why he needs what he calls a definitive ruling. Meantime, the party goes on.

RP seeks registration of $1B in bonds

THE PHILIPPINES has asked the US Securities and Exchange Commission to allow it to register as much as $1 billion worth of securities in preparation for a global bond float that it is preparing.

The request was made in anticipation of robust investors' appetite for Philippine borrowings following the enthusiasm that marked the country's 15-year bond issue in January, when the government raised $750 million but the offers to buy reached more than $2 billion.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the government tapped HSBC Corp. as global coordinator while JP Morgan Chase & Co. and Deutsche Bank AG were tagged as joint lead managers.

Sources said the government also tapped Goldman Sachs, Credit Suisse First Boston, Morgan Stanley Dean Witter and Bear Stearns Ltd. as co-lead underwriters for the borrowing that could go up to as high as $1 billion.

The plan, said a source, was to issue two sets of global bonds at $500 million each with a maturity of seven and 10 years.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said the government would wait for Malaysia to complete its $500-million to $1-billion global bond float.

The Philippines and Malaysia were in head-to-head competition for the attention and funds of offshore investors, when the two countries launched much anticipated sovereign bond deals worth $1.2 billion.

The Philippines kicked off pre-marketing for a $700-million, seven-year bond issue, which was expected to be completed later this week, sources at the lead managers told Reuters.

Industry sources separately said Malaysia would add $500 million to its existing sovereign bonds due 2011, with the new tranche selling to yield 179-184 basis points (bps) over US Treasuries in a deal expected to close by Tuesday.

Together, the deals would double the volume of sovereign paper sold by Asian governments outside of Japan to international investors so far this year, but traders said there would be no problem mopping up the supply.

Clarissa S. Batino

NDC seeks guarantee for new IOUs

THE NATIONAL Development Co. will seek a government guarantee for its plan to issue a new set of IOUs to refinance some P5 billion worth of five-year bonds set to mature in April 2004.

These bonds were sold in 1999 and were the first and only IOUs issued under the P50-billion Economic Recovery through Agricultural Productivity, or Erap, bonds.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II said the NDC wanted to raise fresh funds and take advantage of the prevailing low interest rates.

The benchmark 91-day treasury bill rate has fallen to 6.911 percent, its lowest since January 1987.

A government guarantee is seen as critical in getting investors to buy the NDC bonds, considering the poor financial state of the government's private investment arm.

An SGV & Co. audit in 2000 showed that NDC had P4 billion in impaired capital, half of which was accounted for by the P2 billion sunk into the failed First Centennial Clark Corp.

Roxas, who is also NDC chair, did not disclose the new terms for the refinancing and the purpose for NDC's fund-raising campaign.

Under the terms of the Erap bonds, the NDC can only use the proceeds for agriculture projects and in equity form and not as credit.

Also, the NDC is barred from holding more than 49-percent equity in a single project.

Roxas found these investment guidelines too rigid and the five-year maturity period too short for NDC to generate sufficient returns for its borrowing costs. The bonds have a yield of 7.87 percent annually.

Investments in agriculture require a longer gestation period and offer modest returns, which is why Roxas has advocated for flexible terms such as investments in information technology and education and longer repayment period.

Due to these limitations, NDC only sold P5 billion out of its mandate to offer P50 billion and was forced to reallocate P4 billion out of the P5 billion it raised to government financial institutions for re-lending to small and medium enterprises.

Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

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Exports down 9%, in line with forecasts

MERCHANDISE exports fell in January to $2.63 billion from $2.889 billion in the same month a year ago. The figure was in line with analysts' expectations.

In December 2001, exports fell around 24 percent to $2.645 billion from a year earlier's $3.496 billion.

"There was steeper (year-on-year) drop in December, so maybe this could mean a tapering off. But one-month data is not enough to establish a trend," ATR Kim Eng research head Alex Pomento said.

Other analysts said, however, that the smaller contraction in January might augur well for the exports trend in the near term. Much also depended on the pace of a recovery in the United States and in Southeast Asian countries, they added.

According to the data released by the National Statistics Office, exports of electronic components, accounting for 54.6 percent of the aggregate export revenue for January, declined by 14.5 percent to $1.437 billion from $1.681 billion last year.

Exports to the Philippines' top trading partner, the United States, which accounted for 24.7 percent of aggregate receipts in January, decreased 21.2 percent to $649.84 million from last year's $824.50 million.

"While we remain concerned about the strength of the US recovery, the recent data do suggest a stronger-than-expected near-term prospect for continued export improvement," said 4CAST analyst Xin Xie.

"The robust consumer spending in the United States is especially positive for the Philippines given the low tech nature of its exports, high proportions of electronics exports notwithstanding."

4CAST said it expected the peso to remain under downward pressure but also saw the central bank resisting the peso appreciation in an effort to build up reserves and speed up export recovery.

Economists' consensus is for the US economic recovery to take place around the second quarter of this year.

Jojo Gonzales, head of research at Philippine Equity Partners, said the impact on the Philippine economy would likely be felt in the second half of the year.

"There is obviously going to be a lag, so if at all, maybe sometime in the second half when you begin to see (the impact in) decent, positive numbers like exports," Gonzales said.

Asked what would be the drivers of growth in the first half, he said: "Well, listening to the government's own account, I think they continue to expect growth from agriculture, services, which was pretty much a carry over from last year. Industry was barely growing." ***Reuters***

Gov't revises full-year export growth target

MERCHANDISE exports should rise by between one percent to 1.5 percent this year after shipments stopped contracting in double digits in January, Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas said yesterday.

Canlas said the earlier that full-year forecast of zero growth, following a 15.6-percent fall for the whole of 2001, was being updated after January exports fell by only 9 percent, the lowest decline in 10 months.

"We're projecting a recovery in exports this year from the original projection of zero growth," Canlas told a news conference.

"We're looking at one-percent to 1.5-percent growth recovery this year."

Canlas said the narrower decline in January exports pointed to a recovery for the sector this year.

Analysts said the export drop in January was lower than expected but predicted shipments would have continued to fall in February. However, a pick up in orders for electronics goods from the United States and other markets was expected this month.

"We were really expecting the contraction to narrow between 10 and 14 percent, so the 9 percent was slightly better than we expected," said Song Seng Wun of GK Goh Research.

"The decline in Asian exports we've been seeing is coming to an end with exports already leveling off in the past few months."

Manila's exports could contract by up to 2 percent in February before posting one- to 2-percent growth in March, Song said. ***Doris C. Dumlao***

Basel II to force bank consolidation

SINGAPORE—A new system on bank capital requirements under the proposed Basel II accord is seen forcing the banking sectors of the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia to consolidate.

In a speech during the Asian Banker Summit here on Friday, Lehman Brothers banking research head for Asia Paul Sheehan said banks in these countries would have to merge or be taken over because Basel II, once approved, would impose high economic penalties on bad banks.

Basel II seeks to link capital requirements to the internal ratings of banks. Under this proposal, banks will have to allocate capital commensurate to the risk involved so that the more risky a borrower is seen to be, the more capital a bank will have to allocate for lending to that borrower.

"Basel II is bad news for bad banks. Their interbank risk weight will rise from an automatic 20 percent to as much as 150 percent, effectively pricing them out of the interbank markets," Sheehan said. "As most derivative trades have at least one global counterparty, rising risk weights will impair the worst banks' abilities to hedge themselves at an acceptable risk.

In an interview, Sheehan said new risk weightings under the proposed Basel II would raise overall level of capital for most banks in Asia, and the Philippines was particularly vulnerable because some banks were insolvent. ***Elena R. Torrijos***

COUNTRY SHARES

As of March 05, 2002

	BUYING	SELLING
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB A/B*	1.05 M/1.7 M*	-
ALTA VISTA A/B*	-	400,000/500,000*
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	725,000	750,000
CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB A/B*	-	100,000/105,000*
CAMP JOHN HAY	265,000	300,000
CANLUBANG	-	600,000
CAPITOL HILLS	120,000	125,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	190,000	200,000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B*/C**	620,000**	350,000/450,000*/700,000**
EVERCREST A/B*	136,000*	100,000
FONTANA D/C*/B**	-	90,000/150,000*280,000**
FOREST HILLS A/B*/C**	200,000	230,000/350,000*/325,000**
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	250,000	275,000/325,000*
MANILA POLO CLUB	2.55M	2,700,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A/B*	630,000/700,000*	670,000/750,000*
METROPOLITAN A/B*	-	120,000/125,000*
MIMOSA IND /C2*	150,000/200,000*	155,000/255,000*
MT. MALARAYAT A/C*	600,000*	400,000/625,000*
ORCHARD A/B*/C**	200,000	250,000/350,000*/425,000**
PUERTO AZUL A	125,000	130,000
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	203,000	220,000
RIVIERA A/B*	-	195,000/400,000*
ROCKWELL CLUB	-	550,000
ROYALE TAGAYTAY A/B*/C**	-	110,000/150,000*/180,000**
SHERWOOD HILLS A/B*/C**	-	150,000/250,000*/350,000**
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB A	-	1,800,000
SUBIC BAY IND/CORP.*	290,000*	200,000/350,000*
TAT FILIPINAS GOLF A/B*	-	350,000/550,000*
TAGAYTAY H-LANDS CC/GOLF*	395,000/500,000*	400,000/670,000*
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	750,000	-
VALLE VERDE IND.	-	165,000
VALLEY GOLF	225,000	-

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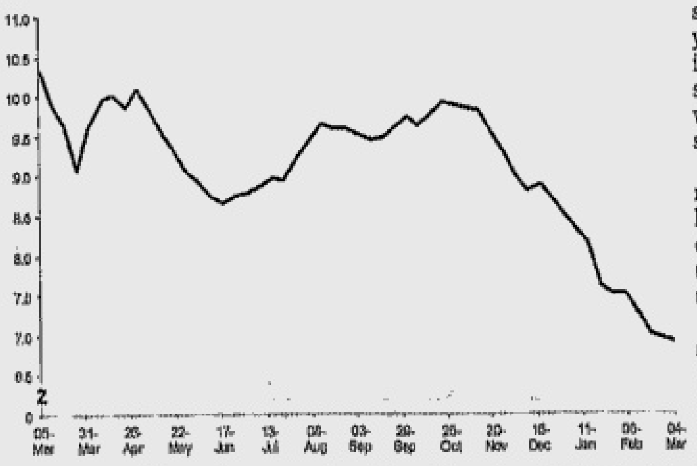
HONDA

Treasury bill rates extend decline to 9 straight weeks

By Clarissa S. Batino



AMPLE liquidity and limited investment opportunities yesterday extended the decline in the government's borrowing rate to nine straight weeks, with the benchmark 91-day treasury bill rate hitting a new 15-year low of 6.911 percent.

Government officials said that rates had not bottomed out contrary to expectations although they admitted that the trend of the decline should slow down in the coming weeks.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said that a 5-percent inflation rate could actually support a 91-day rate of as low as 6.5 percent. The government is considering adjusting its inflation target from a range of 5-6 percent to 4-5 percent.

The 91-day yield yesterday shed 8.9 basis points but still failed to breach its all time-low of 6.88 percent recorded in February 1987. The 182-day yield fell by 15.4 basis points to 7.288 percent.

Deputy Treasurer Eduardo Mendiola yesterday clarified that the record low was actually 6.88 percent and not 6.98 percent for the three-month debt paper.

"We still see some room for the rates to go down because of ample liquidity in the system coupled with sound economic fundamentals, particularly a low inflation and good growth numbers," Mendiola said.

A trader from a local bank pointed out that the decline in treasury yields yesterday was supported by a fresh P29 billion in funds that came from the redemption of special series IOUs issued by the government.

Part of the securities that had matured were liquidity reserves surrendered by locally operating lenders to the central bank when it required a higher level of reserves last year.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas had brought back in late 2001 and early this year the reserve requirement to 16 percent from 20 percent, thus freeing more than P50 billion in funds of the banks.

Mendiola said the market had discounted the cut in BSP reserves but traders said that with no other attractive outlet for investments, banks still chose to park their funds in short-term government securities.

"I think we can still duplicate this week's decline in rates for next week," he said.

Another trader explained that after the Bureau of Treasury had suspended the issuance of one-year bills, there had been a dearth in the market for short-term instruments. This had made the weekly treasury bill auctions a soldout affair.

Yesterday, offers for the two maturities each exceeded P5 billion but the government, based on its program, only accepted a total of P3 billion worth of bids for the two tenors.

"There is a scarce supply of short-term instruments both in the primary and secondary market. Just imagine that P4 billion worth of treasury bills mature each week out of their issuance last year and of this, we can also place back P3 billion," a trader from a foreign bank said.

"Plus, there had been no quotes for 91-day and 182-day papers in the secondary market," he added.

The trader said market forces were pushing rates to go down much lower than the BSP's overnight borrowing rate of 7.25 percent.

Still, the government is not complaining because in the first two months of the year, it had already realized savings of P7 billion in its debt servicing. This amount was comparable with the full-year savings on interest payments in 2001.

Moody's sees rating upgrade in late 2002

By Elena R. Torrijos

SINGAPORE—International ratings agency Moody's would most likely upgrade its ratings of Philippine banks over the medium-term if the economy continues to recover and Congress passes proposed legislation to ease the banks' burden of bad assets.

In an interview Friday with the INQUIRER, Moody's senior analyst Patrick Winsbury said that an improved economic environment by the second half and good deals for the disposal of banks' non-performing loans and acquired assets could lead the ratings agency to change the outlook on some banks to "positive" from "stable" as early as late this year.

A positive outlook would indicate that there are factors in the next 12 to 18 months that could prod an upward rating change.

"Once the legislation is passed, which may take a while, then you need to get market participants to understand what it can do for them and we'll need to see what deals emerge and what their precise characteristics are. But certainly, in combination with an improvement in the (economic) environment they have potential for being positive for ratings in the medium-term," Winsbury said.

Moody's earlier said that the more favorable economic climate for the banks and their customers should result from the Macapagal administration's efforts to address fiscal sustainability, in combination with the prospects for a modest recovery in exports later in the year.

RFM confirms talks to sell Swift to SMC

RFM Corp., the country's second largest food firm, confirmed yesterday that it was in preliminary talks to sell meat processing unit Swift Foods Inc. to food and beer giant San Miguel Corp.

"RFM has been in discussion with San Miguel on a possible merger or acquisition opportunity in Swift Foods Inc.," RFM president and chief executive officer Jose Concepcion said in a statement.

"This has been an old discussion (but) it would be natural for SMC to revive its interest in Swift and other companies since it has a lot of cash too from the recent Kirin investments," he pointed out.

Concepcion, however, denied a newspaper report that his family was selling its majority stake in RFM to San Miguel.

"RFM is the one in search of good opportunities for acquisition that will support its growth objectives," Concepcion said.

In an earlier telephone interview with Reuters, San Miguel vice chair Ramon Ang said RFM offered to sell Swift Foods to San Miguel two weeks ago.

"We're still looking at it. There's no price yet," he said.

Asked if San Miguel was inclined to take the offer, he said: "We're looking at it. We're checking their financial condition, for instance, their debt situation." ***Reuters***

North tollway loan deal cited

LONDON-BASED "Project Finance Magazine," a monthly trade journal published by Euromoney Publications Plc., has picked the Manila North Tollways Corp. (MNTC) project financing agreement as the "Asia-Pacific Transport Deal of the Year 2001" in its annual search for groundbreaking financial transactions worldwide.

The deal was for $371 million in loans to reconstruct the North Luzon Expressway (NLE) in 24 months beginning in the second quarter this year.

The MNTC transaction marked the first toll road deal in the Philippines signed in July 2001 under a limited recourse funding and one without a government guarantee. It is also a flagship infrastructure project of the government and the first to be signed under the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The total project cost of $371 million is divided into a $117.5-million equity injection and a $253.5-million debt facility with a debt-to-equity ratio of 68.3-to-31.7.

The winners and recipients of the "Project Finance Deals of the Year 2001" will be honored at a black tie dinner and presentations at The Grosvenor House in London and at the Waldorf Astoria in New York on March 6.

MNTC and FPIDC will be represented by Oscar M. Lopez, chair, and Christian S. Monsod, chief strategist, respectively, of the Lopez Group at the Waldorf ceremonies.

Honda's $45-M project gets tariff concession

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG has granted preferential duties to Honda Motor Co. Ltd. of Japan's $45-million, automotive production-sharing venture involving its subsidiaries in the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

The Cabinet-level Tariff and Related Matters has endorsed Honda's application to cut duties on parts of Honda Civic, Accord and CRV models from between 7 and 10 percent to 3 and 5 percent.

The tariff cut would pave the way for the swapping of parts between Honda's factories in the region under three projects in the Asean Industrial Cooperation (Aico) program.

The TRM has allowed Honda's Philippine subsidiary, Honda Cars Philippines Inc. (HCPI), to bring in $5.08 million worth of parts for Civic from Thailand annually. In return, HCPI will export $5.3 million worth of Civic components to Thailand.

HCPI also got the green light to import CRV at 3-percent duty and Civic and Accord at 5-percent duty from Malaysia and Indonesia. HCPI will ship in $2.57 million worth of components from Malaysia and Indonesia while exporting $2.115 million worth of parts to these countries.

The TRM will also issue a third EO granting 3-percent tariff on CRV components coming from Thailand. HCPI will import $14.9 million annually while shipping out $15.5 million to Thailand. Overall, these production-sharing arrangements would yield a trade surplus of less than half a million dollars for the Philippines.

Honda will be the fourth carmaker to have an Aico project involving its Philippines subsidiaries. The government had earlier approved the Aico projects of Toyota Motor Philippines Corp., Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp., and Ford Motor Co. Philippines Inc.

Aico is meant to improve the competitive position of Asean companies in the global and regional markets ahead of the start of the Asean Free Trade Area in 2003 by providing the means to apply the principles of economies of scale and scope in the manufacturing process.

MRTC affirms support for Edsa rail project

From page B1

to us," he explained.

He added that an asset transfer was the government's way to reduce cost on its part.

"Last year, the government discussed the possibility of reducing cost to them by way of an asset transfer. The government was the one who looked for ways to reduce cost, not us," he said.

Since their discussions about the asset transfer last year, Daza said nothing about it had been brought up again. He said discussions between the government and MRTC had been only for the pending implementation of the Edsa MRT-3 extension project.

The 5.1-km railway extension project is pending approval from the National Economic and Development Authority-Investment Coordination Committee.

Proceeds from the $170-million ABS that the consortium is negotiating with Germany's Hypovereinsbank would be used to finance the project.

"We're serious and committed to get Phase 2," Daza had said in an earlier interview.

He added that MRTC also submitted proposals to the DOTC for the Edsa MRT-3 airport extension project, which would extend the existing Edsa MRT-3 from Edsa to Roxas Blvd. to the airport.

He said the consortium hoped to start constructing the Edsa MRT-3 Phase 2 project as soon as possible as it would like to proceed with discussions for the airport extension project.

Another proposal, for the Makati Loop (Edsa to Ayala to Buendia), was also submitted at around the same time as the airport extension project.

CURRENCIES

March 4, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency In US$	Foreign currency In Peso
United States	Dollar	1.155535	1.000000	51.2010
Japan	Yen	0.008667	0.007500	0.3840
United Kingdom	Pound	1.639126	1.418500	72.6286
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.148336	0.128370	6.5727
Switzerland	Franc	0.676939	0.585823	29.9947
Canada	Dollar	0.725565	0.627904	32.1493
Singapore	Dollar	0.630751	0.545852	27.9482
Australia	Dollar	0.598103	0.517598	26.5015
Bahrain	Dinar	3.065243	2.652661	135.8189
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.308143	0.266667	13.6536
Brunei	Dollar	0.613994	0.531350	27.2057
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000114	0.000099	0.0051
Thailand	Baht	0.026466	0.022904	1.1727
UAE	Dirham	0.314688	0.272331	13.9436
Korea	Won	0.000879	0.000761	0.0390
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.865400	44.3093
Brazil	Real	0.491717	0.425532	21.7877
Denmark	Kroner	0.134553	0.116442	5.9619
India	Rupee	0.023776	0.020576	1.0535
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.304088	0.263158	13.4740
Mexico	New Peso	0.134553	0.116442	5.9619
New Zealand	Dollar	0.488391	0.422654	21.6403
Norway	Kroner	0.129856	0.112377	5.7538
Pakistan	Rupee	0.019275	0.016681	0.8541
South Africa	Rand	0.102714	0.088889	4.5512
Sweden	Kroner	0.110038	0.095227	4.8757
Syria	Pound	0.026503	0.022936	1.1743
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.033015	0.028571	1.4629
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001156	0.001	0.0512

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Monday, March 4, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	10,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	68	69	68	69	461,200
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	18	18	18	18	17,000
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	31.5	32.5	31	32	636,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	212	214	212	214	110,110
Philippine National Bank	67	67	66	66	1,800
Phil. Savings Bank	27	27	27	27	100
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13	13	13	13	27,700
Security Bank Corp.	19.25	19.25	19.25	19.25	8,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	20.25	20.75	20.25	20.5	136,900
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	200,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	110,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1320	1340	1320	1340	6,440
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	40,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1060	1070	1060	1070	5,970
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	32.5	34.5	32.5	32.5	60,300
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.68	0.72	0.68	0.71	8,160,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	795	800	795	800	26,520
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.07	0.0725	0.0675	0.0675	58,800,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3	3	3	3	201,000
Piltel	0.49	0.52	0.48	0.5	26,160,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	500	500	490	492.5	277,090
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.022	24,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	33.5	34	33	33	131,300
Manila Electric Co. B	50.5	51.5	50.5	50.5	1,356,900
Petron Corp.	1.9	1.98	1.9	1.94	5,233,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	30,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.12	1.16	1.12	1.16	224,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.75	3,740,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.35	0.35	240,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	10,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	9,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	1,330,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.63	0.64	0.63	0.64	40,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	10,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	4,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.25	13.5	55,300
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	24	24	23.75	23.75	76,000
RFM Corp.	1.50	1.6	1.5	1.5	10,643,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	5,000
San Miguel Corp. A	48.5	48.5	48	48.5	278,400
San Miguel Corp. B	64.5	66.5	64.5	65.5	258,000
Universal Robina Corp.	4.9	4.95	4.9	4.9	208,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	10,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	10,000
Ayala Corp.	6.7	7	6.7	7	4,673,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.02	2.12	2.02	2.12	2,215,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	100,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	170,000
APC Group Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	3,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	200,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.75	3	2.75	3	131,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.22	0.24	110,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.86	0.86	0.83	0.84	26,350,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	200,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	990,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.12	0.125	1,960,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.041	0.041	0.041	0.041	500,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.06	700,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	33	34	33	33.5	559,800
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	100,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.165	0.18	0.165	0.175	11,380,000
Ionics Inc.	8.1	8.1	8	8	23,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.84	1.9	1.84	1.9	194,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	4,000,000
Medco Holdings	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.83	0.83	0.82	0.83	2,690,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	350,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.3	0.33	0.3	0.32	3,230,000
Music Corp.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.33	3,400,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	200,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.86	0.86	0.85	0.86	20,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	720,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	2,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	1,010,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	8,000
Federal Chemicals Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	10,000
Matsushita Elec Phil. Corp.	5	5	5	5	1,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	280,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.5	50,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.53	0.56	0.53	0.54	11,890,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	20,000
Manila Jockey Club	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	55,400
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.35	0.37	0.33	0.36	860,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	33	35	32.5	32.5	706,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	775	775	775	775	120
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.66	1.72	1.66	1.72	41,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	800	800	800	800	550
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	180,000,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0055	0.0055	0.005	0.0055	66,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.9	7	6.9	7	18,573,000
Cityland Development Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	100,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	270,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	2,070,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.56	0.57	0.55	0.56	12,930,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	2,600,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.36	2.38	2.34	2.36	5,222,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	20,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.42	0.45	0.42	0.44	1,630,000
SM Development Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.12	1.12	213,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9	4,079,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't.	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.85	7,391,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	37,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	18,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.195	0.2	0.195	0.2	500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	500,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	10,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0046	0.0048	0.0046	0.0048	67,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't. Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	2,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	500,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.3	0.3	0.28	0.28	860,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	3,600,000
Interport Res. B	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	13,000,000
Pacifica	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	5,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.0725	0.08	0.0725	0.075	8,400,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.22	0.22	0.18	0.18	50,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,772,220	94,686,345.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	839,615,045	2,658,171,200.90
PRO	47,707,000	180,553,860.00
Mining	106,788,000	23,172,550.00
OIL	31,050,000	877,800.00
GRAND TOTALS:	1,026,932,265	2,957,461,755.90

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	571.16	UP 6.09
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,951.74	UP 27.67
PRO	632.40	UP 5.74
Mining	1,378.97	UP 24.24
OIL	1.97	DOWN 0.03
All Shares Index	760.39	UP 13.93
Composite	1,429.35	UP 18.93

NO. OF ADVANCES: 55; NO. OF DECLINES: 27; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 42; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 124; NO. OF TRADES: 3,777

DISCLOSURES

CONCRETE Aggregates Corp. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from April 10 to any day in June. The company also disclosed the sale of its 4.4-hectare property in Antipolo City to **SAAC Development Corp.** for P42.1 million.

* * *

METROPOLITAN Bank & Trust Co. and **Global Business Bank Inc.** moved to a later date the special stockholders' meeting originally scheduled for March 15. The meeting is to take up the final terms of the merger of the two banks.

* * *

NEGROS Navigation Co. Inc. announced the resignation of Ricardo Pascua and Michael Goco as directors of the company. Elected to replace them were Conrado Carballo and Augusto Palisoc Jr. Also, Bethram Tan was appointed president.

* * *

ASIAN Terminals Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from April 25 to May 16.

* * *

FIRST Metro Investment Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 23, 4 p.m. at the 22/F of Metrobank Plaza, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of March 8 shall be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. Also, Nimfa Balmes-Pastrana was elected corporate secretary. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Japan floods economy with money, but to no avail

TOKYO—Japan's super-loose monetary policy has pumped massive amounts of money into the economy, but a crippled financial system has stopped much of it from being put to productive use, analysts say.

Bank of Japan (BOJ) data on Monday showed that the country's monetary base—money in circulation plus banks' deposits at the central bank—rose 27.5 percent year-on-year in February.

It was the biggest jump since August 1974 and the sixth consecutive month of double-digit growth.

But while textbook economics suggests growth in the monetary base—one gauge of how much money the BOJ is doling out to the banking system—leads to a rise in economic activity, there is little sign in recession-hit Japan of that happening.

Bank lending fell for the 49th straight month in January, while retail sales dropped for the 10th.

The flood of money has also failed to reverse a three-year fall in consumer prices, even though the monetary base is now expanding at a pace last seen in 1974 when inflation hit over 20 percent because of a surge in crude oil prices.

Economists said the main effect of all this liquidity could be to push up long-term interest rates by fanning more government debt buying.

"The monetary base has fallen out of sync with the real economy," said Izuru Kato, chief economist at Totan Research. "The reason lies with a lack of confidence in the financial sector and the current zero-interest rate environment."

Under its "quantitative easing" policy, the BOJ injects funds into the banking system via daily money market operations and long-term government bond purchases so the volume of banks' current account deposits at the BOJ reaches a desired target.

The target is now set way above the level of what banks need to keep at the central bank in the form of obligatory reserves.

Ideally, banks would take the extra, non-interest-bearing deposits and use the funds for lending or as leverage to boost lending.

But mountains of bad debt and a dearth of credit-worthy companies have made banks reluctant to do so.

Households are also sitting on savings and showing little inclination to do much with them, with many ordinary Japanese preferring to hold their money in safes at home rather than risk leaving them in banks whose financial health is in doubt.

The phasing-out of a government guarantee on deposits from April has been another factor behind such behavior, along with the rock-bottom interest rates currently paid on bank deposits.

Monetary base data showed banknotes in circulation jumped 12.4 percent in February from a year ago, but most of it seemed to be sitting idly with households.

"The ratio of cash to the rest of the liquidity in the economy is hitting peaks last seen during the Great Depression in the 1930s," said Yasushi Okada, chief economist at Credit Suisse First Boston.

"The economy is in a dire state where people think it's safer to hold cash at home than to hold it at the bank."

Japan's money supply—a proxy for how much money the financial sector is supplying the economy—has shown anemic growth despite the BOJ's drastic monetary easing.

The key measure of money supply, M2—cash, demand deposits and time deposits held by households and companies—plus certificates of deposit (CDs), rose 3.6 percent in the year to January. *Reuters*

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Chinese deputies call for reduced economic intervention

BEIJING—A series of deputies to the annual gathering of China's parliament, beginning this week, have called on the government to sharply cut back its intervention in economic affairs, state media said Monday.

The demands, ahead of the National People's Congress (NPC) session starting Tuesday, illustrates how far China's nominally communist economic policy has reversed under two decades of marker based reforms.

But whatever the changes since economic opening-up began, three deputies quoted late Sunday by the Xinhua news agency insisted reform was not fast enough.

Fang Xiaoyu said bluntly the government must "improve its performance," especially in economic matters, and that this was the biggest challenge facing China following its entry last year to the World Trade Organization.

Authorities should stop intervening in business decisions made by state-owned firms or trying to develop certain industries, as these initiatives "could be best decided by businesses," Xinhua quoted Fang as saying.

Another deputy, Sun Qianfu, the manager of an alcoholic drink factory in central China, said his firm was having a "hard time" due to orders by local authorities to acquire other businesses and to diversify. *AFP*

Gores plans to bid for Global Crossing

LOS ANGELES—Gores Technology Group, a firm that acquires troubled assets of major companies and tries to turn them around, plans to make a bid for bankrupt telecommunications firm Global Crossing Ltd., a source familiar with the situation said on Sunday.

Los Angeles-based Gores, whose recent acquisitions include Mattel Inc.'s Learning Co. educational software unit and Hewlett-Packard Co.'s VeriFone, could make the bid as early as this week in federal Bankruptcy Court in New York, said the source who spoke on condition of anonymity.

He declined to say how much the deal would be worth, except to say it would provide "substantially more value" to the company than a $750-million bid now being considered from two Asian companies.

A Gores spokesperson would neither confirm nor deny if a bid was in the works, saying the company doesn't comment on market speculation.

Hamilton, Bermuda-based Global Crossing filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on Jan. 28. In its filing, the operator of a worldwide fiber optic telecommunications network listed about $12 billion in debt and $22.4 billion in assets, making it the fourth biggest bankruptcy in US history. *Reuters*

More work, less play on Internet, says US survey

WASHINGTON—The Internet is more of a workhorse and less of a hobbyhorse in the United States, a Pew survey said Sunday.

"The Internet has gone from novelty to utility for many Americans," said Lee Rainie, Director for the Pew Internet project.

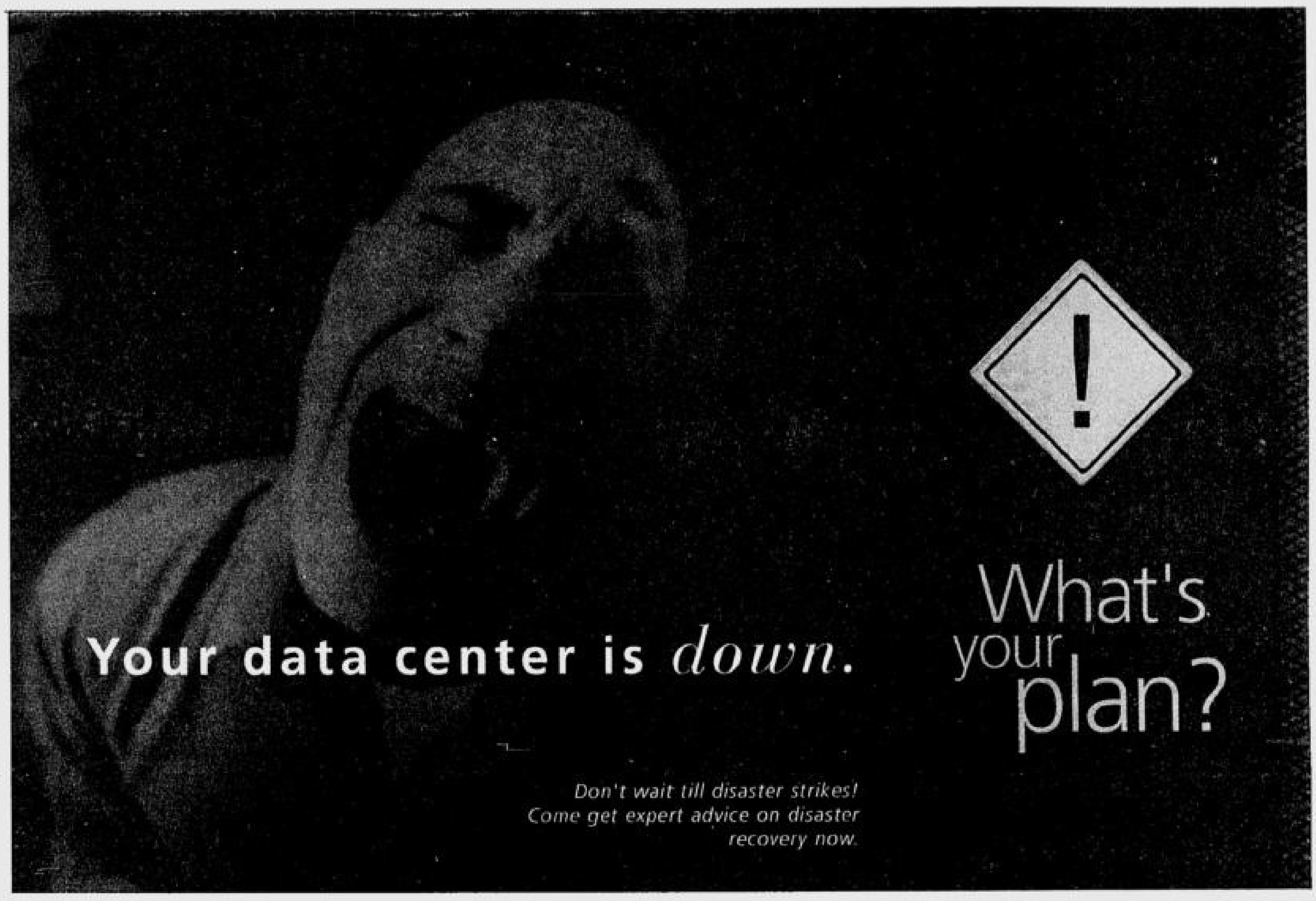
The number of people in the United States who used the Internet at work jumped from 43 million to 55 million from March 2000 to January 2002.

Not surprisingly, 44 percent of those who have Internet access at work say it helps them to a better job, said Pew.

The non-profit group, which is also studying the Internet habits each year of a thousand people in the United States, found that the percentage of Internet users among them had grown from 46 percent in March 2000 to 57 percent in March 2001.

E-mail makes up much of the use of the Internet, said Pew, putting 51 million US users in contact by March 2001, up from just 30 million in 2000—a 70-percent increase in just one year.

The rapid growth in the number of users is possible because of an ever-expanding online network. *AFP*


Your data center is *down*.
What's your plan?
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Event details

Kuala Lumpur • MALAYSIA
Tuesday, 12 March 2002
HOTEL NIKKO, Ballroom 3
RSVP • Tel: 03 4142 9252
Fax: 03 4142 4282
E-mail: veritas-event@pmgasia.com.sg

SINGAPORE
Wednesday, 13 March 2002
RAFFLES HOTEL, The Ballroom
RSVP • Tel: 6 324 9361
Fax: 6 324 5088
E-mail: veritas-event@pmgasia.com.sg

Bangkok • THAILAND
Friday, 15 March 2002
SIAM INTER-CONTINENTAL HOTEL
Sarocha 2 & 3
RSVP • Tel: 02 711 6891
Fax: 02 381 8792
E-mail: veritas-reg@penner-madison.com
Contact: Khun Pattareeya P.

Manila • PHILIPPINES
Tuesday, 19 March 2002
MAKATI SHANGRI-LA, Rizal A
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Internet crime, viruses, power failures, human errors, fires... Disasters come in all forms and the impact to your business' bottom line, productivity and survival can be seriously damaging. As information becomes a key driver in your daily business operations, you can't afford any unplanned downtime and data loss.

Building an effective Disaster Recovery plan into the IT strategy is an absolute must for businesses today. In these difficult economic times, the key challenge is to have the flexibility to choose the right disaster recovery solutions, on an application-by-application basis, across all operating systems and hardware platforms.

At this free conference, experts from VERITAS, StorageTek, Brocade and Compaq will show you how to effectively plan and execute a good disaster recovery plan that optimizes resources, address key priorities and ensure fast implementation whilst leaving room for growth. Plan now to reduce economic losses and ensure a safe recovery from disasters.

Event Highlights

DR Concepts and Planning
This section of the presentation explores the basic concepts of leveraging the available technologies to protect your IT environment against a disaster. Even in the midst of a disaster occurrence, it will help you understand how to ensure that these data are current and quickly recovered. Finally it will explore some key considerations when planning your disaster recovery strategy.

DR Solutions and Technology - Basic safety net
It highlights the importance of always having a backup copy of your data and examines some of the principles required in the disaster recovery process of data backup and recovery. Also, it explores the technological capabilities that can be deployed to enhance recovery time, from both local and site disasters, such as vaulting a duplication. Find out how you can diminish risk of data loss and reduce costs associated with downtime.

DR Solutions and Technology - Enhancing time to recovery
This section highlights some of the more advanced technologies that can take you way beyond the basic safety net. It looks at how you can avoid unplanned downtime, and ensure the fastest possible recovery with completely current data in the event of unexpected disaster happenings.

Program

9.00	Coffee and Registration
9.30	Welcome and Introduction
9.45	**DR Concepts and Planning**
10.15	**DR Solutions and Technology - Basic safety net**
10.45	Coffee Break
11.00	**DR Solutions and Technology - Enhancing time to Recovery**
11.45	Brocade : **Building Business Continuance Solutions using Brocade and VERITAS**
12.30	Lunch
13.30	StorageTek: **Disaster Recovery Strategies For Today's Data Centers**
14.15	Compaq : **Matching the right solution to your Disaster Recovery requirement**
15.00	**DR Testing and Management**
15.15	Q & A and End

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Tuesday, 19 March 2002

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REALESTATE

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Youths kick off 2002 Habitat construction

By Charles E. Buban

HABITAT for Humanity Philippines has enlisted the services of the country's various youth organizations to kick off this year's house construction with Youth Build 2002.

Now on its third year, Youth Build 2002 is targeting some 250 housing units to be set up in 20 construction sites around the country.

This year's Youth Build will be set on the following construction sites which will be led by its respective Habitat local chapters: Western Batangas, Metro Cebu, Butuan and Muntinlupa.

"It basically offers the youth an opportunity to share in the cause of providing hundreds of families with descent housing," says Margie Moran-Floreindo, steering committee co-chair of Youth Build 2002.

Social responsibility

The project, according to Floreindo, will provide the youths good values and social responsibility. "Through volunteerism, they also learn that taking positive action as an individual can make a difference in the community and nation-building," she says.

To meet the amount of budget needed to build a house, schools, organizations or church, youth communities have partnered with each other or with a corporation.

"This is the time for our youths to show their talents and creativity. In fact, some youth organizations are raising funds through concerts, movie premieres, garage sales, book sales, cake raffles and just about any worthwhile endeavor," reports Floreindo.

Volunteering spirit

She added that such volunteering spirit among youths would further deepen their involvement not only in fund raising activities but that they might even sponsor a house one day.

Youth Build 2002 had its formal launch last Saturday at the Poveda Learning Center. Caltex Philippines, Jollibee Foods Corp. and Standard Chartered Bank are just some of the corporations that have pledged their support to the event.

Habitat for Humanity Philippines Foundation Inc. is a non-profit, ecumenical Christian organization dedicated to building houses to families in need of simple, yet descent shelters. The units are sold to these families at no-interest loan.

Habitat for Humanity Philippines is part of an international group founded by Americans Millard and Linda Fuller in 1976. Since then it has expanded to over 1,500 affiliates in the United States, while over 100,000 families worldwide are living in Habitat homes. Overall, Habitat International has worked in more than 63 countries including the Philippines.

KLAPPSTUHL Classics. This is a sample of exquisitely designed furniture by Klappstuhl. Every piece, from contemporary and traditional furniture, to kitchen and dining, to efficiently designed office systems, is crafted to ensure customer satisfaction.

Klappstuhl offering more services

IN LINE with its expansion program, Klappstuhl is making its services available not only for furniture manufacturing but also interior finishing. This was revealed by Klappstuhl president and general manager Teddy Martinez.

Martinez also said the company aims to serve its clientele better by adapting a more comprehensive approach to its services, the Klappstuhl one-stop-shop approach. This is to ensure that minimal downtime is incurred (meaning less cost) and deadlines are met.

Klappstuhl is a subsidiary of Rota Mundial International Inc.

Georgetown inaugurates clubhouse this summer

GEORGETOWN Lakeview Vacation Estate in Metro Tagaytay will inaugurate its clubhouse this summer.

Designed for the exclusive use of its residents, the clubhouse boasts of state-of-the-art facilities that include an indoor heated swimming pool, a fitness center and a game room where one can indulge in billiards, table tennis, darts, chess and video games. It also has a viewing deck where one can relish the breathtaking sight of the Taal Volcano.

Now fully operational are the basketball and tennis courts and the fully equipped gym.

Georgetown offers 10 beautifully designed American country home-inspired units. What sets it apart from other vacation estates is that it offers each homeowner a clear, unobstructed view of the famous Taal Lake and Volcano.

Housing dep't-Pag-Ibig integration can raise shelter production level

By Florentino Dulalia Jr.
Contributor

CREBA (Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association) advocates the integration of the Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF), or Pag-Ibig, with the proposed Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD) to raise housing production to the highest level possible.

As the government's highest policy-making body for housing, the proposed housing department is mandated to govern and monitor all areas of real estate and urban development. It is therefore incumbent upon the department to orchestrate the collective efforts of the government's different agencies so that housing production is expedited and raised to the highest possible level in the shortest time possible.

Like a conductor of a symphony orchestra, the department is envisaged to be working together with all the agencies concerned in a resolute manner to coordinate things well and keep them in harmony.

Cooperation

Jawaharlal Nehru, India's great leader, called public attention to the significance of cooperation in an essay that he circulated among his friends in 1958. Titled "Credo," it was published later on by Time Magazine.

"The law of life," he says, "should not be the competition of acquisitiveness, but cooperation, the good of each contributing to the good of all."

Pag-Ibig manages the provident fund of its members with prudence so that they can save for their future and meet their housing needs. By ensuring the viability and profitability of the fund, the HDMF makes shelter security easily available and affordable to homeless Filipino households.

Along this line, the Department of Housing will provide the safeguards that will guarantee the optimum utilization of Pag-Ibig fund for housing. As the government's housing arm, it will draw up the most effective policies in accordance with a well-planned holistic development framework.

DULALIA

Pag-Ibig, now on its 21st year of service, is called upon to continue to strengthen its commitment to housing via partnerships and cooperation with various government agencies. In a country like the Philippines, genuine team play is the surest road to progress and achievement.

Reg'l planning session

Creba's first regional planning session, which was held in Pampanga and participated in by 50 members from the Central Luzon chapters (Pampanga, Tarlac, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija). The participants expressed full support for the Chamber's membership activation and reactivation campaigns.

The association's by-laws, membership dues, formation of regional directors' offices (RDOs), and reactivation of chapters and memberships were taken up during the forum. Sponsors of the forum were Central Country Estate, owner-developer of the Lakeshore (which was represented by its president, architect Nestor Mangion); and Land Properties Development Corp., owner-developer of North BelAir Subdivision in Bulacan (represented by Celso Ingusan, manager).

A similar forum was held Feb. 22 at Camp John Hay in Baguio City for the North chapters—Laoag, La Union, Dagupan and Baguio City. It was sponsored by Lexber Inc., owner-developer of Lexber Townhouses in Baguio City.

(Dulalia is the national president of Creba.)

Housing agency collects ₱34B from borrowers

A TOTAL of P34 billion in housing loan payments by the respective members of the Social Security System, Government Service Insurance System and the Home Development Mutual Fund, or Pag-Ibig Fund, has been collected and remitted to these pension funds by the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. under the government's Unified Home Lending Program.

In a press statement, NHMFC president Angelico T. Salud reported that these remittances, covering the period 1989 to January 2002, were in compliance with the mandates given the NHMFC under Executive Order 90 issued under the then revolutionary powers of President Corazon C. Aquino following the Edsa I revolution, making the NHMFC as the administrator of the Unified Home Lending Program.

Fund allocations

Under the said executive order, fund allocations for housing loans of the SSS, the GSIS and the HDMF are pooled and administered by the NHMFC for lending to the respective members of the three pension funds, as part of overall government strategy to jumpstart economic activities.

However, the unified home lending scheme was discontinued in the wake of the Asian financial crisis in 1996-1997 in favor of a multi-window lending scheme where the pension funds reverted to lending homeloans directly to their members or through accredited conduit banks, Salud explained.

Of the total collections made during the said period, P25.39 billion has been remitted to the SSS; P5.06 billion to the GSIS; and P3.5 billion to the HDMF or Pag-Ibig Fund.

Aggressive efforts

Net of the said remittances, the NHMFC has outstanding principal balances in the total amount of P37.7 billion as of last month on the funding releases made by the three pension funds to the NHMFC used in financing the acquisition by their respective members of housing units, consisting of P27.33 billion with the SSS; P5.8 billion with the GSIS; and P4.5 billion with Pag-Ibig Fund.

The NHMFC's institutional payments to these pension funds are a result of its aggressive loan collection efforts through the agency's account management teams; provision of loan updating and restructuring with penalty condonation; sale of mortgage rights on hard-core delinquent accounts; and foreclosure of these accounts, as a last resort.

Despite these efforts, housing loan repayments by individual pension fund members were adversely affected by the economic hardships brought about among others by the Asian financial crisis; onset of the worldwide economic recession in 1998; and the ill-effects of the Sept. 11 terror incidents last year.

The loans, as direct benefit to the members, remain solidly secured by real estate properties that have actually increased in value over the years.

UNION CEMENT CENTERS

UNION Cement Corp. together with its major retailers—PCSTA Marketing and Sta. Dolorosa Mdse.—recently inaugurated the Union Cement Centers located in Sucat, Parañaque City and Norzagaray, Bulacan. These cement centers are among several stores to be opened in NCR and Region 3. Shown are Union Cement SVP for sales and marketing Dr. Francis Felizardo and Anson Ong, UCC dealer and owner of PCSTA Marketing.

Palms designer reveals dream mission

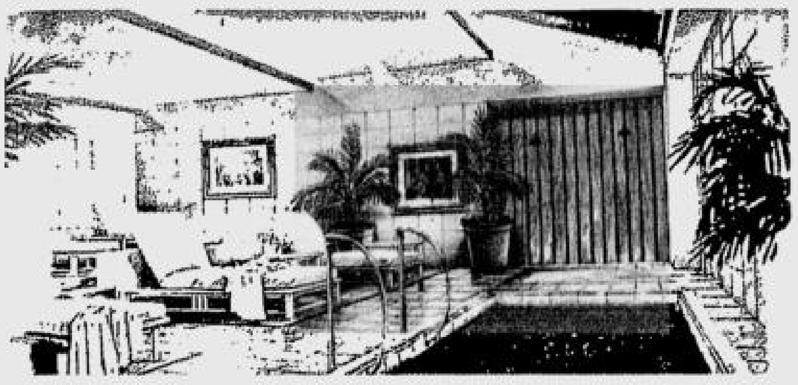
THE MAN whose creative touch permeates the walls and halls of prestigious international hotels such as the Grand Hyatt Bali, Shangri-La Hotel Manila and Bangkok and the Peninsula Hotel, Sheraton Hong Kong and many other hotel properties overseas and in Manila brings the same touch to the Palms Country Club in Filinvest Alabang.

A product of world-renowned Hirsch/Bedner and Associates (HK), Arien de Guzman has been the "dream house" designer of a long but select list of prominent residents in the country.

Totally new concept

The Palms Country Club project is, to him, a totally new concept. Interpreting the developer's mission of creating an environment which is soothing and relaxing, De Guzman has internalized the character of the proposed club, aiming to capture the harmonious interplay of high and low energies that defines a real club atmosphere.

Says the youthful international designer: "My designs for The Palms Country Club will be strikingly contemporary. Modern, in fact. But the prevailing mood will be influenced by natural, warm and visually enriching Asian accents. Contemporary with Asian flair, in short." His home was recently featured in BluPrint lifestyle magazine.



DE Guzman is a spa habitué. This is evident in the design of the Bliss Garden Spa, treatment rooms will have skylight and indoor gardens.

'A place with soul'

When asked whether he was successful in delivering a "place with soul," De Guzman responds by inviting members and media men to see for themselves.

A lot of the design concept revolved around bringing the outdoors indoors. Open spaces, bay windows, free-flowing areas give the refreshing aura of life and well-being that is what The Palms promises its members.

Accustomed to the high standards demanded by the hospitality business, De Guzman chose the best combination of colors, textures and materials, most of which were sourced overseas. Furniture is mostly teak wood from Indonesia, tiles and stone surfaces from Italy, and upholstery and window treatments from France. The color palette is a play on light beige accentuated by natural elements such as teak furniture, artifacts and Asian decor.

All public areas are user-friendly, relaxed, restful and imbibes a pleasurable feeling of being pampered.

Plans for age groups

Since The Palms Country Club is a family country club, conscious planning was done to ensure that age groups are allowed their freedom of privacy and interaction.

Children and teens will have their playroom, video center, day care area, game room and sports and recreational area.

Restaurants and bars have been envisioned as having diverse personalities. Catering to sensory delights, the Melange continental dining room will have a more sedate environment, while Café Sonata, the center of more active interaction for the family, is relaxed in ambience, with views of the exterior landscaped areas. Strikes Sports Bar by its very nature is futuristic in design and the Ichizen Japanese restaurant, on the other hand, is a minimalistic culinary haven.

De Guzman's favorite place is the Bliss Spa. Being a confessed spa disciple, he has been inspired by the Peninsula Hong Kong Spa. The Bliss Spa, once again, upholds the "pampering" mode, introducing natural skylight and indoor gardens in its treatment rooms.

Sometime May, members and their guests will see the designer's dream mission unfold as The Palms Country Club opens its doors.

Federal Hardware that carries bulky items, complete line of bathroom accessories

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

SPACIOUS, bright, air-conditioned and relaxing are not adjectives normally associated with the typical hardware or home depot but then Federal Hardware Builder's Center is anything but typical.

There are already mall-based hardware shops such as True Value, Handyman of the Robinsons Galleria chain and the SM Workshops but Federal Hardware boasts of being the only one that can carry bulky items such as lumber products and the complete line of bathroom accessories.

Stand-alone store

Federal Hardware president Jeffrey Ng told the INQUIRER that the group was inspired to put up Federal Hardware by the trend in the United States toward do-it-yourself products. Ng noted that most American homeowners no longer want to leave the purchasing decisions to their interior decorators or contractors, but they want to do it themselves.

"We adapted to the requirements of the local environment and we placed a lot of emphasis on tiles, bathroom accessories and lumber products. Since bulky items cannot be conveniently sold in mall-based home depots, we thought it better to put up a stand alone store," Ng explained.

He expected that the Philippines would catch on to this trend, thus, would require a large, spacious area where they could look over the basic items needed to build a house.

Federal Hardware has 4,000 square meters of air-conditioned display and selling areas. The merchandise was arranged in a way that the customers can try out the different products, make their measurements and look over the merchandise before making a purchase.

Aside from the bulky items, it also sells plumbing equipment, hand and power tools, paints, lawn and garden accessories, electrical, lights and accessories, car care products and even a lawn and garden section

It also carries products of companies such as 3M, Black and Decker, Buffalo, Champs, Daiken, Danze, De Walt, Draper, Dutch Boy, General Electric, Jett, Philips, Pointer and Yale.

30 stores

The first one-stop builder's destination was put up on Chino Roces Avenue extension in Makati City in September last year with at least seven more branches scheduled to be opened this year in Bacoor, Taytay, Cainta, Angeles, Imus, Las Piñas and Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Ng said the company planned to open 30 stores all over the country over the next three years.

"We feel that the scope, size and the breadth of the products is our strength. We are also the largest importer, manufacturer and retailer of tiles and we have made it more enjoyable for people to shop for their home products here," Ng said.

Store assistants

Aside from the products, Ng said Federal Hardware has also tried to differentiate itself from the market by training store assistants. These assistants should not merely sell, but actually help the customers use or handle the different products.

There are even in-house interior designers to give clients advice on mixing and matching tiles and bathroom fixtures.

Despite the added expense for training, Ng said Federal Hardware's products would end up cheaper or at most, the same as the prices of the mom and pop hardware stores.

"We can be cheaper on some items because we buy in bulk. Whatever savings we generate we pass on to the market through lower costs. And since we are not based in a mall, our rent is not that high," he added.

Plaza Maestro

COMMERCIAL COMPLEX OPENING
Archbishop Edmund Abaya, DD, of Nueva Segovia, assisted by Fr. Be Avila, officiates the blessing ceremony of the multimillion-peso, three-story Plaza Maestro Commercial Complex located in the heart of Vigan City, Ilocos Sur. Built and operated by BCS Realty, the building is now a landmark and fast becoming a tourist attraction. With them is Yuriko Singson, director of the BCS Realty Holdings, the contractor and operator of the building. The center has a façade with a Spanish-inspired water fountain as centerpiece and over 4,000 sq. m leaseable commercial space.

Crown Asia's opening salvo for 2002

LEADING middle- income property developer Crown Asia starts off the year of the horse with the launch of its own "stakes race," a tournament for its sales network with more than P10 million in cash and prizes to be given away.

Held at the Miriam College Mini Theater in Quezon City, the launch coincided with Crown Asia's Annual Awards for its top selling property consultants, business partners and sales managers and contractors.

Tribute

"The annual awards serves as a fitting tribute to a fruitful year for our sales network who are already winners from 2001's monthly and quarterly awards and incentives," said Marcelino C. Mendoza, chief executive officer of Crown Asia.

Mendoza said Crown Asia also launched its annual sales tournament at the same time to mark what they expect as a "bountiful year for the company, its sales network and the residents of our subdivisions in key areas of the country from Luzon to the Southern Visayas and Northern Mindanao."

Just for the annual awards, more than P1 million were given to the top selling business partners, sales managers and property consultants. There were also citations for the best contractors and engineers falling under the Quality Circle award. The recognition is given annually to encourage Crown Asia's partners to always improve on established goals.

Awardees

Among the awardees for 2001 are CIL Network, Founder's cup special citation; Angel Delos Reyes of Asia Plus, first place, property consultant; Emma Madlang Awa of De Guzman Realty, first place, sales manager category; Glenda Ruedas of Winning Homes Realty, second place; and Evelyn Manarang of Schneider Realty, third place; GAP, Asia Plus, Winning Homes Realty, Almon Realty, De Guzman Realty, FPPPI and LM Realty, top business partners.

Ayds Construction was cited as rookie of the year for the contractor category while Ricarte Santos of C-Yen Builders, Marcial Gimeno Jr. of FIR Builders and Arnold Aliwalas of Janeo- MNCC Home Builders are the top engineers.

Incentives

For the sales tournament 2002, Crown Asia's property consultants, business partners and sales managers will be vying for more than P10 million in prizes. Monthly, quarterly and semiannual incentives like cash and or trips abroad are just some of the other perks given by the real estate firm to its sales network. This is over and above the commissions per sale, which is the highest in the industry.

More than the incentives, Crown Asia has been able to sustain its network because of the variety of houses and subdivisions it has made available for the buying public nationwide.

Crown Asia's housing developments are in Antipolo City, Quezon City, Novaliches, Alabang, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Pangasinan, Cebu, Iloilo, Cagayan De Oro and Davao.

Rockavilla opens Green Estates

ROCKVILLA Realty and Development Corp., Bulacan's pioneer and premier property development firm, has inaugurated its latest project—the Green Estates, a prime residential enclave located in Guiguinto, Bulacan with town mayor Ambrosio Cruz as guest of honor.

Nestled in the quiet and verdant environment of Barangay Tiaong, Green Estates is an ideal place for those seeking to live in a clean and peaceful community. It is conveniently located near North Luzon Expressway's Tabe Toll Plaza and is only 30 minutes away from SM City North Edsa and MRT North Avenue station.

RRDC executive vice president Den Kalalang said Green Estates is the company's most prestigious project so far. "We envision it to be a self-contained community with its own schools, commercial area and a 24-hour public transportation terminal to make coming and going to the village easier and more convenient"

Green Estates also represents the intensified thrust of the RRDC to provide quality homes to buyers under the Rocka Reborn program. "We have distinguished ourselves from the rest through the quality of our houses: from the design, to the materials and workmanship—all because we understand the consumer's needs and desires," said Kalalang.

To live up to the village's name, Kalalang said the RRDC would donate tree seedlings to homeowners that they can plant in their yards to enable them to help keep the environment healthy.

Moldex offers rare trip

THE PUBLIC is invited by Moldex Realty Marketing Inc., to an open house for 1322 Roxas Boulevard, a highrise residential condominium building, on Feb. 10, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The open house will give guests a chance to view the condominium's mockup units and enjoy an exciting trip to the 57th floor. 1322 Roxas Boulevard is reputed to be the tallest condominium building in the country today.

A flagship project of Moldex Land Inc., it combines state-of-the-art facilities and architectural features with spectacular panorama of Manila Bay.

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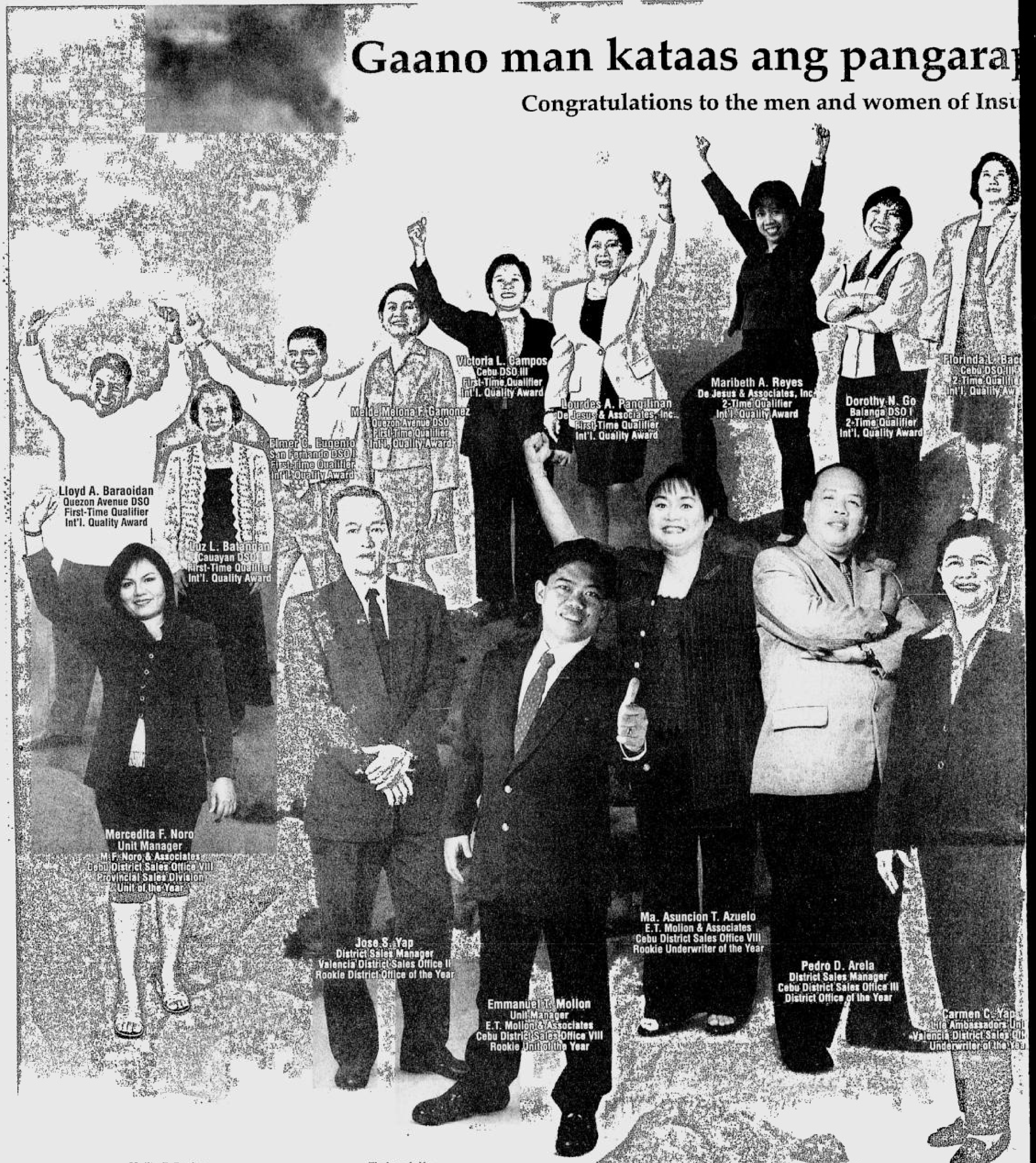

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CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM BID
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VJC-87 a	Andorra St., corner Jackson St., Vista Verde North Subd., Bo. Llano, Caloocan City	276 m² residential lot (TCT No. C-348039)	P 883,200.00
VJC-87 b	Andorra St., Vista Verde North Subd., Bo. Llano, Caloocan City	190 m² residential lot (TCT No. C-348031)	P 570,000.00
VJC-87 c	Andorra St., Vista Verde North Subd., Bo. Llano, Caloocan City	190 m² residential lot (TCT No. C-348032)	P 570,000.00
LRD-145	No. 57 Faustino St., Lawang Bato (now Punturin), Valenzuela City	150 m² residential lot (TCT No. V-59978) with buildings and improvements, and two (2) candle moulding machines	P 510,700.00
BATANGAS			
LJG-129 b	Bo. San Felix, Sto. Tomas Batangas	1,672 m² three (3) adjacent residential lots (TD Nos. 009-01676 R, 009-01679 R and 009-01678 R) with building and improvements.	P 2,596,200.00
MED-132	Bgy. Sta. Rita (Carsada), Batangas City	590 m² two (2) adjoining semi-commercial lots (TCT Nos. T-43159 and T-43160) with warehouse building	P 2,280,000.00
LJG-129 a	Liza Compound, San Roque, Sto. Tomas	325 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-89539) with one-storey residential building	P 1,497,000.00
CAVITE			
MGT-164	Bo. San Jose, Tagaytay City	10,960 m² untitled commercial/residential lot (TD No. 2001-027-01428) with buildings and improvements.	P 23,989,000.00
MGT-165	Bo. Mambog, Bacoor	120 m² two (2) parcels of adjoining residential lots (TCT Nos. T-935854 & 935855 with building and improvements.	P 854,600.00
ILIGAN CITY			
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LAGUNA			
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MGT-166	Bo. San Antonio, San Pedro	324 m² two (2) parcels of adjoining residential lots (TCT No. 468390 and 468391).	P 907,200.00
QUEZON			
VJC-83 a	Bo. Cabuguang, Tagkawayan	203,088 m² lot (TCT No. T-367909)	P 4,569,500.00
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RIZAL			
MBL-166	Lincoln Drive, Bo. Mayamot, Antipolo City	5,029 m² eight (8) parcels of lots (TCT Nos. 317013 to 317020) with unfinished residential building	P 8,500,000.00
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(PDI--March 5, 2002)

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UNIVERSITY OF RIZAL SYSTEM

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The Board of Regents of the University of Rizal System (URS) hereby announces that the Search for URS Presidency is now OPEN.

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not later than **April 3, 2002** to Honorable Commissioner MANUEL D. PUNZAL, Chair, URS Search Committee.

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Cars/Vans 4 Rent 8203894

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L300 T7411356

MARIAN 8955627
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2% w/o Taking Car 8986633

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BUY NARRA SET 732-5865

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Tractor 55T 5kva 45T 10kva 70T 55kva 185T Tel 361-0215

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Ofc Staff 9134470 Ms. Abby

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Ofc staff Pamela 9134470

Wanted Beautician all around M/F Call 757-3219

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

PINAUSUKAN RESTAURANT & CATERING SERVICES ROXAS BLVD PASAY CITY CALL/FAX 523-5480 6362881 MRS. TERESITA DE GUZMAN

PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

MARA PAWNSHOP BR. of 2410-18 P. Gil St. Sta. Ana Manila. Auction Sale on Mar. 11, 2002, Monday at 2:30 in the afternoon, respectively, Oct. 12-Nov. 11, 2001.
Sons of J. Lanuza,
Auctioneer

MARA PAWNSHOP I,II,III,IV and Comembo Br. of Makati City. Auction Sale on Mar. 11, 2002, Mon. at 10:30, 11:30, 1:30, 12:30 and 8:30 in the morning and on the afternoon, respectively Oct. 12-Nov. 11, 2001.
Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer.

MI MARA PAWNSHOP of 251 Quirino Ave. Baclaran, P'que M.M. Auction Sale on Mar. 11, 2002, Mon. at 4:00 in the afternoon, respectively, Oct. 12-Nov. 11, 2001.
Sons of J. Lanuza
Auctioneer

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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Bldg under construction now!
Exactly across crowded
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SAGOT SA KRISIS, SARILING BISNES! JUICE DRINK MAKING BUS. 2564843/44 ; 2569331

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Bobby P. Ocampo has been the subject of a deed of Extra Judicial Settlement among heirs with Waiver of Rights under Doc. No. 172 & 173, Page No. 35, Book No. 02, Series of 2002 in the Notarial Registry of Atty. Severiano D. Orias. PDI-Feb.19,26&Mar.5,2002

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO BLESSED MOTHER
(NEVER KNOWN TO FAIL)

O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this necessity. Oh star of the sea help me and show me, herein you are my Mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech You from the bottom of My Heart to succor me in this necessity there are none that can withstand Your power. Oh show me herein You are Mother.

Oh Mary, conceived without sin. Pray for us who have recoursed to thee (3x).

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in Your hands (3x).

Thank you for Your mercy toward me and being mine.

Thank you Mama Mary for answering my prayers. Amen.

(This prayer must be said for three days and after three days, your request will be granted and the prayer must be published.)

Republic of the Philippines

CAMARINES SUR STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

San Jose, Pili, Camarines Sur
Telefax No. 477-3341

NOTICE OF SEARCH & CALL FOR APPLICATION

The Board of Trustees formally and publicly announces that the Search for the Presidency of Camarines Sur State Agricultural College is now OPEN.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Must be a natural-born Filipino citizen
- Must have an earned doctorate degree
- Must not be more than 61 years of age upon appointment
- Must have at least five (5) years of relevant managerial and administrative experience
- Must be morally upright

Interested applicants or those nominated for the position are requested to submit five (5) sets of the formal application composed of the following:

- Detailed Curriculum Vitaé and certified supporting documents
- Vision and Mission of the College
- Neuro-Psychiatric exam
- Medical certificate
- NBI, Ombudsman, Civil Service Commission, police clearances and disclosure of all administrative, criminal and civil cases

Applications are requested to be submitted on or before **3 April 2002** to:

Rev. Benoni Hernandez
Office of Commissioner Carlito S. Puno
5/F DAP Building, San Miguel Avenue
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

or

Mr. Gilberto Aguilar
Board Secretary
Camarines Sur State Agricultural College
San Jose, Pili, Camarines Sur

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Republic of the Philippines

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

BUREAU OF CUSTOMS

Manila

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that printed copies of supplemental Revision Order (RO) 2-2002 containing lists of transaction values of goods generally described as:

TIRES
MILD STEEL WELDING ELECTRODE

are available to all interested parties at the Bureau of Customs Printing Office, Office of the Commissioner, Port Area, Manila. Details are verifiable at the Valuation and Classification Division (VCD) of this Bureau. For other information, the public may get in touch with the Valuation and Classification Division, telephone number 527-4549.

March 1, 2002, Manila, Philippines.

FOR THE COMMISSIONER:

(Sgd.) **GEORGE M. JEREOS**
Deputy Commissioner
for
Assessment and Operation Coordinating Group
and
Chairman, Customs Valuation Team

(PDI – Mar. 5, 2002)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue
Pasig City, Philippines

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

IFB Number : 2000-02-SEMP-DepEd-BEFP
February 28, 2002
Project Title : Social Expenditure Management Project (SEMP)
Loan No. 4535-PH
Contract Title : Bidding for the Construction/Rehabilitation of School Buildings for Public Elementary and High Schools Nationwide

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) to provide a budget support facility towards the financing of the Social Expenditure Management Project (SEMP) in various currencies. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this facility will be applied to eligible payments under the contracts for the Basic Education Facilities Program to be implemented by the Department of Education, DepEd.
2. The Department of Education (DepEd) now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the bidding of the construction/rehabilitation of the school buildings for the following: Cluster A - Manila, Muntinlupa City, Las Piñas City, Taguig (PhP15.6 Million) Cluster B - Quezon City (PhP19.1 Million) Cluster C - Tarlac City, Bataan (PhP10.5 Million).
3. For the purpose of this bid, eligible bidders must have the experience in works of equivalent nature and complexity over the last five years.
4. Interested eligible bidders may acquire the complete set of bidding documents (excluding blueprinting of plans) starting March 6, 2002. Upon submission of a letter of intent to the Bid Awards Committee (BAC) c/o Au Mendoza at DepEd Central Office, ULTRA Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Tel. No. 635-3762, and payment of a non-refundable fee of: PhP 1,500.00. The form of payment will either be in cash or by cashier's/manager's check.
5. The provisions in the Instruction to Bidders and in the General Conditions of the Contract are provisions of the World Bank Standard Bidding Documents: Procurement of Works.
6. Bids shall be valid for a period of ninety-days (90) after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a bid security of three (3%) percent of total bid price in the form of a bank guarantee; cashier's/manager's check or irrevocable letter of credit.
7. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidder's representative who chose to attend on April 02, 2002, 1000hrs. at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.
8. Prior to bid opening, a pre-bid conference will be held on March 19, 2002, 1400hrs. Bulwagan ng Karunungan, DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.
9. The Department of Education reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive informality therein and to award the package to one or more bidders.

(Sgd.) **ERNESTO S. PANGAN**
Undersecretary and Chair, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)
DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City

(PDI - March 3, 4 & 5, 2002)

PHILIPPINE TOURISM AUTHORITY

MANILA

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY/ APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PTA hereby invites interested parties to pre-qualify/ apply for eligibility and to bid for the Design and Construction of a Light and Sound Museum of Philippine History at Sta. Lucia Street in Intramuros, Manila.

Interested parties must be a Producer in tie-up or in joint-venture with a Contractor who has produced and constructed a similar project, or has substantial experience in undertaking projects of similar scale. The total cost of project is estimated at Seventy Million Pesos (P70,000,000.00).

The Contractor required for the project must possess a PCAB License with Category AAA or Large B in Building while the Producer must have ample experience in the production of lights and sound, or related fields.

Pre-qualification/Eligibility Forms are available for issuance until the deadline of **March 6, 2002** at the BAC Secretariat, Room 621, 6th Floor, DOT Building, T.M. Kalaw Street, Ermita, Manila.

Submission of duly accomplished Pre-qualification/ Eligibility Statements for both the Producer and Contractor shall be on **March 13, 2002.**

Pre-qualified parties shall be issued Terms of Reference, location Plans and Tender Documents on **April 1-3, 2002** for a non-refundable fee of P3,500.00.

Submission of the A&E Design for the Building, Design for the production of the Light and Sound Museum and Bid Proposal for the project shall be at **10:00 AM** on **May 2, 2002**. Opening of bid proposal will follow at **2:00 PM** at the PTA Training Room, #513, 5th Floor, DOT Building, T.M. Kalaw Street, Ermita, Manila.

The government reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any minor defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the government. The PTA shall issue the Notice to Proceed to the winning bidder, upon issuance by the Department of Finance of a notice for the Department of Tourism to enter into and take possession of the aforementioned property and conveyance by the President of the Republic of the Philippines of said property to the DOT.

(Sgd.) **ADEL L. ORIONDO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI -- Mar. 5, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Sarangani
Municipality of Glan

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL TREASURER

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Government of the Municipality of Glan, Sarangani Province invite bidders for the furnishing of the delivery of Glan, Sarangani Province within 30 working days from receipt of the award:

Trucks (12 units) - Isuzu Double Cab

Specifications:

- 4 wheeler
- Completely Built Unit (CBU)
- Reconditioned, Japan made
- With aircon
- With AM/FM Stereo

Date/Time		Schedule of Activities/Venue
March 6, 2002	5:00 PM	Deadline submission Letter of Intent
March 7, 2002	3:00 PM	Pre-qualification/ABC Hall
March 8, 2002	9:00 AM	Opening of Bids/ABC Hall

Terms and Conditions:

- brand new tires
- brand new batteries
- fully painted with lettering
- with jack and tire wrench
- with one (1) year Free LTO registration
- with one (1) year TPL insurance
- with complete customs paper
- guarantee for availability spare parts
- give warranty after sales service

Bids should be specific, items, price quoted shall be in accordance with the quantity as specified above. Please state unit and total of bid.

Envelope containing bids shall be sealed and plainly marked "PROPOSAL" for the furnishing of the above item to be opened on March 8, 2002 at 9:00 a.m. and addressed to the Chairman, Committee on Awards. Bids shall be accompanied by proposal bond in the form of cash, certified check or surety bond in the sum of Five Percent (5%) the amount of bid.

The Municipality of Glan, Sarangani reserves the right to confiscate the bond, if the bidder refuses to accept awards or fails to comply with the conditions of the bid. The right is also reserved to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality hereof or to accept such bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Municipal government. Bidders or their authorized representatives are invited to be present at the time stated above when bids are opened.

A liquidated damage in the amount of one-tenth (1/10) of one percent (1%) of the total value of the contract shall be deducted for each day of delay.

A liquidated damage in the amount of one-tenth (1/10) of one percent of the total value of the undelivered portion shall be deducted for each day of delay, if the contract has been partially filled.

(Sgd.) **RANULFO C. OMEGA**
Municipal Treasurer

(PDI - Feb. 22, Mar 1 & 5, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
METROSTAR EXPRESS

INVITATION TO BID

The DOTC-MRT 3 Bids and Awards Committee invites all interested bidders/suppliers to prequalify and bid for the supply, delivery and installation for the **FURNISHINGS FOR THE MRT 3 CONFERENCE ROOM** Projects with a total approved budget amounting to Php 905,047.00.

Accreditation requirements can be obtained upon payment of non-refundable fee of P100.00 to the Administrative Division, DOTC-MRT 3 Depot, North Avenue cor. EDSA, North Triangle Area, Quezon City. Submission of duly accomplished and notarized pre-qualification documents shall not be later than 5:00 p.m., 15th March 2002. Accredited/ pre-qualified bidders/suppliers need not apply.

Bid documents and complete specifications are available for issuance upon payment of P500.00, which is not refundable, and upon presentation of Notice of Invitation and Certificate of Accreditation.

The DOTC-MRT 3 reserves the right to reject any or all of the bids proposals without offering any reason, waive any informality therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government. This office, likewise, assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids nor does it guarantee that an award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **MARIO C. MIRANDA**
Acting General Manager
Metrostar Express, and
Chairman, PBAC

(PDI - March 4, 5 & 10, 2002)

Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation
Responding Through Responsible Gaming

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION AND TO BID

ITB NO. 02-05-2002

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) is currently looking at implementing an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Software to support its current operations across the country. This ERP project is aimed at increasing the efficiency in financials, logistics and human resource processes at all levels of the organization. In this regard, PAGCOR is inviting all Authorized and Exclusive Distributors/Dealers/ Remarketeers to prequalify in its forthcoming bidding for the supply, customization and support of the ERP Software based on the following eligibility specifications:

(1) ERP Software
  1.1 Should be able to run under UNIX Operating System
  1.2 Oracle Database
  1.3 Browser-based
  1.4 Should belong to the Top 5 ERP Products internationally and should have at least 40 reference sites locally

(2) Vendor
  2.1 Vendor should have a local office in the country whereby immediate maintenance and support concerning the software can be readily made available.
  2.2 Vendor should be able to ensure that PAGCOR will enjoy regular updates of the software as part of the ongoing software maintenance.
  2.3 Should implementation services be wholly or partially done by other "partners", the vendor should indicate the partners' role or scope of work.
  2.4 Vendor should be able to arrange a site visit, walkthroughs, and interviews if deemed necessary by PAGCOR, etc. to one of its existing clients.
  2.5 Vendor should be able to provide PAGCOR a one (1) year warranty period on the software.

Suppliers should primarily comply with PAGCOR's Accreditation requirements in order to participate in the pre-qualification proceedings. The Application Form for Accreditation is available at the **SUPPLIERS ACCREDITATION & EVALUATION DIVISION (SAED), PROCUREMENT & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT (PPD), 2nd Floor, PAGCOR House, 1330 Roxas Boulevard, Ermita, Manila.**

For Pre-qualification, send a letter of intent addressed to **MR. GERWYN P. SEE, Suppliers Accreditation & Evaluation Officer**. All Accreditation and Pre-qualification documents should be submitted before **5:00 p.m. of Friday, March 15, 2002**. Failure to comply with the requirements will render outright disqualification. Inquiries may be coursed through the **SUPPLIERS ACCREDITATION & EVALUATION DIVISION, Tel. No. 526-0573, Fax No. 523-2045.**

Interested suppliers must pick up **"Instructions for Prospective Bidders to Prequalify" documents (2 sheets) from MR. JOSE YCAY, Project Officer, at the FOREIGN PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS ADMINISTRATION UNIT, PPD.**

All pre-qualified prospective bidders shall be invited to attend a **PRE-BID CONFERENCE**, the schedule of which shall be relayed through telephone and/or formal letters.

ACCEPTANCE and **OPENING OF BIDS** shall be announced during the Pre-bid Conference.

PAGCOR reserves the right to disqualify any prospective bidder if found that they have submitted falsified documents and/or information, and the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, to waive any defects or formalities found therein and to accept such bid or a part thereof as may be deemed most advantageous to PAGCOR, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Please address all communications to the undersigned.

(Sgd.) **CARMENCITA A. ESPINOSA**
Chairman
Bids & Awards Committee (BAC) "B"

(PDI - Mar. 3, 4 & 5, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

East Ave., Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632) 920-6401 • (632) 920-6446
E-mail: sssmail@info.com.ph • Web site: http//www.sss.gov.ph

Visit the SSS website for Bid Invitations

INVITATION TO BID
JANITORIAL SERVICES

The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM is inviting bidders for a two (2) year contract of janitorial services to be rendered at the following buildings/premises:

Lot 1 - Main Office Building including MAC and RIMC
Lot 2 - Sarmiento Building, BRC, Bagbag Records Center and NCR Branches

List of pre-qualification requirements must be obtained from the Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat, 6th Floor, SSS Main Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City with telephone numbers 922-2991 and 920-6401 local 5490/5491. The deadline for the submission of pre-qualification documents is on 02 April 2002, at the same address.

The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the System. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the System guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **ERNESTO G. GASIS**
Assistant Vice President
and Acting Chairman, Bids &
Awards Committee

(PDI--Mar. 5, 2002)

INQUIRER
TRiViA
By BONG BARRAMEDA

Whiter shade of white

Q. How do detergents make white clothes whiter?

A. Most white fabrics turn gradually yellow with age. To fight this natural process, many detergents contain what manufacturers call optical and chemical bleaches. Optical bleaches, also known as fabric brighteners or fluorescers, work by absorbing invisible ultraviolet light and emitting visible blue light. This counteracts any yellow in the fabric and produces white. In daylight, the light emitted from white fabric washed with optical bleach makes it appear brighter and 'whiter than white.' On the other hand, chemical bleaches brighten your whites by removing stain. This by either adding oxygen or chlorine to the chemicals that make up the stains, or removing oxygen from the stains. These chemical reactions turn many coloring, stain-making agents into colorless chemicals. Of course, laundry detergents usually contain just enough bleach to remove many stains without at the same time removing the dyes from normally color-fast clothes.

Take a Tip. To wash away the stubborn grime of gardening or housework, sprinkle a little sugar on your hands as you lather with soap and water. In fact, a number of skin experts say that you can sweeten your face with sugar, literally, by mixing a teaspoon with soap lather and using the sugar as cleansing grains.

Classified Odd. Frederick the Great, king of Prussia between 1740 and 1786, hated water, rarely washed his hands or face, and almost every morning touched up his cheeks with red paint to make himself appear fresh and healthy.

WORD WATCH

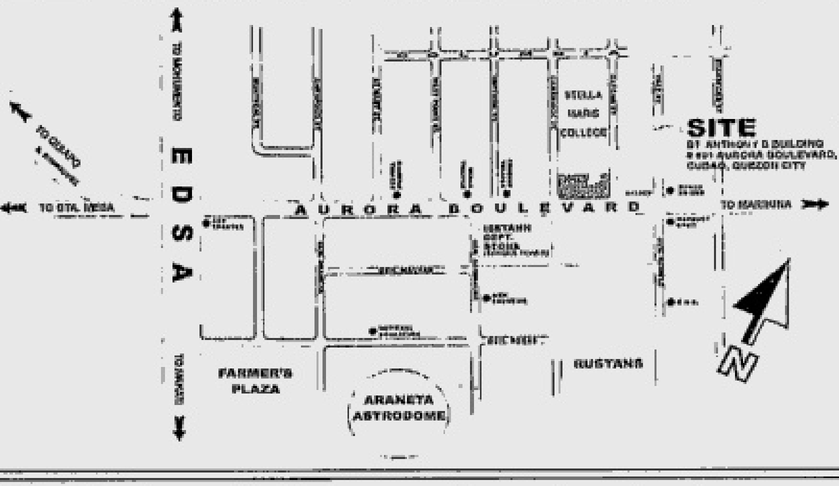
Sabon : Tagalog corruption of the Spanish *jabon*, 'soap.'

PDI -- March 5, 2002

INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS

Aurora branch is now open to serve your Classified Ads requirements.

For inquiries, please call **912-9008** to **11**.



I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.
2 Timothy 6:7

With deep gratitude, we thank all of you who were with us, remembered us in prayers, sent condolences and flowers... during our time of loss.

May the knowledge that Joe is now in the warm embrace of our Loving Father fill us all with peace and renewed faith...

The family of the late

JOSE M. ESTEBAN, JR.

(†) January 25, 2002

Menchu

Chim** and **Mabel** • **Roly** and **Alen** • **RJ** and **Liv
Celina, Joey** & **Miggy** • **JP, Jonathan** & **Raya** • **Anton** & **Rafa

---

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FR. TIMOTHY F. NGODCHO, S.J.

was called home to the Lord on Saturday, March 2, 2002.

Wake: From the Ateneo de Zamboanga University Chapel, the body will be brought to Bontoc on Tuesday, March 5. After 6 AM Mass on Thursday, March 7, it will be taken to the Oratory of St. Ignatius, Loyola House of Studies, Ateneo de Manila University Campus, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Concelebrated Mass in the Oratory of St. Ignatius on Friday evening, March 8, at 8:00 PM.

Funeral Mass: at 8 A.M. on Saturday, March 9
in the Oratory of St. Ignatius, Loyola House of Studies

Interment: Sacred Heart Novitiate Cemetery, Novaliches, Quezon City, immediately after the Funeral Mass.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE REPOSE OF HIS SOUL.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN

"...watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live.
Teach them to your children and to their children after them."
Deuteronomy 4:9

On his 20th Death Anniversary

we lovingly remember

JUSTICE CARMELINO G. ALVENDIA

November 3, 1906 - March 6, 1982

He was a devoted family man, diligent scholar, honest and courageous public servant, dedicated teacher, just person and loyal friend.

Papa, your memory will forever live in our hearts, in the hearts of our children, and in the hearts of all those whose lives you touched.

The Holy Mass will be celebrated for him at the Alvendia family plot, Plaza of Peace, Manila Memorial Park, tomorrow, Wednesday, March 6, 2002, at 8:00 AM. Friends and relatives are all invited to attend. May we request the reader to say a prayer for the eternal repose of his soul.

LOURDES OLORIZ AFZELIUS
"Lulu"

October 8, 1928 - March 3, 2002

Her bereaved husband	**Edwin Rendon Afzelius**
Children	**Antonio & Edith Ruiz** **Edwin & Carmen (Perrenoud)** **Edward & Ana Ma. (Beech)** **Filomeno (Noni) & Evelyn Hocson** **Edmund & Marirose (Cacho)** **Enrique (Henry) & Elizabeth (Lizzie) Atayde** **Edgar**
Grandchildren	**Johann, Angela & Monica Ruiz** **Ysabel & Cristina Afzelius** **Timmy & Belle Hocson** **EJ, Mikel & Marco Afzelius** **Martin & Joaquin Atayde**
Godmother	**Edith O' Farrell**
Brothers and Sisters	**Pilar (†) & Willy (†) Jacinto** **Chito (†) & Nene Casten** **Molo (†) & Mameng Oloriz** **Angelita & Pepe (†) Carlotta** **Mitos & Pepe Mari** **Pacita & Alvaring (†) Barretto** **Eddie & Ana Oloriz** **Charlie & Millet Oloriz**

Her body lies in state at Chapel 1, St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori, Magallanes.

Funeral Mass and cremation will be announced later.

ARLENE SAQUING-CHOA PECK

Peacefully joined her Creator
on March 4, 2002 at the age of 46.

Her bereaved parents **JUAN & ROSARIO (CHARING)**, siblings **DANNY & JOSIE OLIVEROS, ROGER & EVELYN LOMBOS, MELVYN & NORA, MANNY & CHRISTINE IDQUIVAL, AGUSTIN, ARMIL & CARMELINE ANGELES**, nephews, nieces and relatives request everyone to pray for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, St. Bernadette Chapel, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Cremation will be on Thursday, March 7, 2002 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City at 2:00 p.m.

ENRIQUETA GARCIA DENOSTA

Peacefully joined our Creator on 2 March 2002
at the age of 64.

Her bereaved children **Angelyn G. Denosta** and **Emmanuel G. Denosta**; grandchildren **Raymond, Carlo, Nouie, Marie** and **Cookie**, nephews, most especially **Marlo**, nieces and relatives request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Greenhills Memorial Chapels, Cagayan de Oro City.

Interment will be on Thursday, March 7, 2002 at Greenhills Memorial Homes at Bulua, Cagayan de Oro City at 2:00 PM.

PAZ LAGMAN vda de SANTOS

of Baliwag, Bulacan
founder of the Baliwag Fashion School
born May 5, 1918

Joined her Creator on March 3, 2002

Her loving son **Emmanuel** (†); daughter-in-law **May**; grandchildren **Rhoderick, Frederick, Mary Ann & Dennis**, and **Joseph Emmanuel**; great-grandchildren **Abraham Arthur** and **Filippe Emmanuel**, request the pious readers to pray for her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Baliwag Fashion School, J. Buizon Street, Baliwag Bulacan. Requiem Mass will be on March 6, 2002 at 2:00 p.m. at Baliwag Parish Church (San Agustine Church).

Interment follows at the Baliwag Catholic Cemetery.

People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor

aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Euro traders to join Home & Garden 2002

THE EUROPEAN Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) has reached an agreement with H&G International, a division of Leverage International, which is organizing Home & Garden 2002, the international exhibition for home and garden products scheduled for Sept. 19-21 at the World Trade Center Metro Manila.

The ECCP will recruit European companies that are engaged in the manufacture of home and garden products for export to Asia to join Home & Garden 2002.

Earlier, the commercial service of the United Embassy signed a contract with Leverage International. The commercial service will put up a pavilion in the three-day exhibition.

Expected to participate in the trade show are leading manufacturers, distributors, dealers and retailers of home appliances and furnishings and garden decors and products from the United States, Europe and Asian countries including the Philippines, Japan, China, Korea, Vietnam, Iran, and others.

Home products to be exhibited include air-conditioners, component systems, computers, freezers and refrigerators, corded/cordless telephones, electric fans and flat irons, karaoke, microwave ovens, rice cookers, vacuum cleaners, toasters, washing machines and dryers, security systems and equipment, dining room and bedroom accessories, bathroom fixtures, floor coverings and carpets, home decors and housewares, lamp and lighting fixtures, and windows and window grills.

Also to be exhibited are do-it-yourself kits, draperies and curtain fixtures, household utensils, musical instruments, paints, pest control products, remodeling and renovation products. Garden items to be displayed will include cutflowers, equipment and materials for horticulture, garden decors and products, landscaping equipment and supplies, swimming pool equipment and supplies, and ornamental greenery and outdoor furniture.

Those interested to join the show may call Elizabeth M. Cruz at 818-6828 and 813-2473 or Robert A. Sanchez

ACRC APPRECIATION DINNER

The Advertising Board of the Philippines' Advertising Content Regulation Committee (ACRC) recently held an appreciation dinner at the Peking Garden Restaurant at the Glorietta. Present that night were (standing, from left) Cris Honrado (ACRC coordinator), John Lucas, Jojo Samson, Billy Rockwell, Jun Alcantara, Edwin Fajardo, Danny Adapon, Ricky Velez, Monching Flores, Angelica Suiza, Adie Peña, Bobby Banaag, Oscar Valenzuela, Joe Valle and Maya Estrada. Seated, from left, were Bien Fernando (TSC chair), Pinky Abellada, Elaine Go-Mapa, Socky Pitargue, Jose Sy (ACRC chair), Joyce Dizon, Jaz Buñag, Josie Tan-Magtoto, Barbie Mojica and Mila Marquez.

DEPED WITNESSES LDLC OPENING

Edward Travis, president and chair of Little Dipper Learning Center (LDLC) briefs DSWD Undersecretary Lourdes G. Balanon on the LDLC website during the formal opening of LDLC recently. Looking on are (seated, from left) chief EED Gerry Consolation DepEd-NCR, Luzviminda Ona, DepEd-NCR in charge of preschool education, director Teresita G. Inciong of the DepEd Bureau of Elementary Education, Bing Baguioro, LDLC program consultant and Ning Villa, LDLC director. Standing is Travis' wife LDLC VP-admin Teng holding their son Teddy.

New SKTA courses

THE SHARP-Karilagan Training Academy (SKTA) is known as a leading training institution helping to qualify and enhance the knowledge and skills of Filipinos who want to have better opportunities in the local and international market. Accredited by Tesda, SKTA offers training programs for caregivers, TOEFL and TSE review, courses on hygiene and sanitation/USPH, customer relations enhancement, fine dining, housekeeping, bar service and mixology, pastry, pantry, culinary fundamentals, messman training, and food hygiene and safety. Soon it will offer German and Nippongo conversational classes, including training modules for call centers. SKTA offers big discounts on group enrollments. For inquiries, visit the fifth floor of the Shipping Center Building, A. Soriano Avenue, Intramuros, Manila, or call 527-6418/527-1590, or visit www.cfsharp.com/training/.

Splash Island reopens

CORPORATE outings and family get-togethers will surely get a positive response for a planned-summer activity with the awaited reopening of Splash Island, the country's only world-class water park, this March.

The six-hectare aqua wonderland in Biñan, Laguna features thrilling rides set against a lush tropical landscape. The more notable ones are the body slides, inner tube slides, a mat racing ride and a family raft ride. Blood-pumping excitement is offered by amusements such as the Dos Supremos and King Pilipit slides with plenty of turns and giant twisters. The Big Bam Boo, Twisted Palms and Tausug Trails,on the other hand, offer riders on inner tubes with thrilling back-to-back 360-degree turns, full circle curves and down-the-tube dives.

Other favorites include the huge 30-meter wave pool with wave generators that produce waves rolling one after the other, reminiscent of the famous California surfs, and a lazy river that measures 1,200 feet.

For kids, Splash Island has Camp Carambola with rides specially designed for them. In Bannakita, children can have a river adventure while the Boon Docks gives them a delightful wilderness expedition. There is also Water Wahoo, an elaborate water play system with exciting features and effects.

One may just bump into showbiz and sports personalities in the wide-expanse white beach playing volleyball, as the park has become a favorite destination of people in the celluloid and athletic world.

Given the meticulous planning for the park, topnotch consideration was given to its maintenance. Clean water is assured through a centralized filtration system located at the center of the park. Pool technicians perform an hourly check on the water to make sure that it is healthy for treading. From its first year of operation, Splash Island had already received an excellent rating on aquatic safety from Jeff Ellis and Associates Inc. of Texas, a highly acclaimed international aquatic safety consulting firm.

Also forming part of the security measure is the assignment of at least two marshals at every slide to guide riders on how to ride correctly. The marshals see to it that guests are not allowed to proceed with the ride until they are assured that a previous rider has safely completed the course and is out of the way of the next rider.

Colorful and sumptuous feasts characterize the Fiesta Sa Pulo, the park's food court where mouth-watering dishes are served.

To know more about what splashing excitement is in store for you this summer, call 928-0507, 410-8100 and 699-2320 to 22.

DISTRIBUTORSHIP AGREEMENT

Helukabel GmbH managing director Helmut Luksch (seated, left) recently signed the certificate of appointment of Zenith Wire & Conduit Inc. (ZWC) as the exclusive Philippine distributor of Helukabel's ISO 9001 certified industrial line of cables, wires and accessories such as flexible control cables, data and computer cables, halogen-free cables, flat cables, heat-resistant cables, ship and wiring cables, lift cables, and fiber optic cables. Established in 1988, Helukabel is one of the largest cable manufacturers in Germany. Shown is ZWC president Benjamin Calubad (seated, center) signing the acknowledgement of appointment, while Helukabel GmbH export manager Hartmut Kellner von Bergen (seated, right) and ZWC officers (standing from left) general manager Virginio de Leon, Jr. and vice president for finance Julia Calubad witness the event.

SMART
MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
SIG

SMART PARTNERS WITH MEGALINK

Smart Communications Inc. (Smart) has partnered with ATM network giant MegaLink to provide account holders of its member-banks access to various financial services via its Smart mobile phones. In the memorandum of agreement, MegaLink agreed to develop and implement a mobile banking system incorporating Smart's GSM financial applications via short messaging service (SMS or text messaging) and Smart's third generation SIM Tool Kit (STK) technology. Through MegaLink's network interconnection to its member banks, Smart mobile phone users will be able to conduct balance inquiries, intra-bank fund transfers, statement requests, checkbook requests, Smart Buddy and Smart Money prepaid card reloads and bills payment. Shown is Napoleon L. Nazareno, Smart president (third from left), sealing the deal with (third from right) Antonio L. Go, MegaLink chair. With them are (from left) Ian C. Wilson, senior advisor Smart Money, Alex D. Ibasco, group head for mobile commerce-business development, Smart; Ramon Y. Sy, MegaLink president, and Criselda B. Santillan, MegaLink general manager.

CARTOON NETWORK WINNER

Sofia Recto (right) was named winner of Cartoon Network's Acme Hour Birthday Blast for January. Sofia celebrated her third birthday Cartoon Network-style when she was greeted on Cartoon Network's Acme Hour and received a cool Mega Blocks showcase from prize sponsor Richwell Trading. Shown is Sofia being presented with her Mega Blocks showcase by Maye Yao, marketing manager of Richwell Trading.

HONEST EMPLOYEE CITED

Nilo Taladoja (right), a maintenance personnel of City Services assigned to the SM Megamall, was recently cited by Figaro owner Fernando Go (left) for his honesty. Go accidentally left his wallet in the men's room at the second floor of the Sm Megamall Mega A. The wallet, containing cash and documents, was found by Taladoja, who immediately surrendered this to his supervisor. This was returned intact the same evening to Go, who thanked Taladoja for his honesty.

ROBINSONS CHOICE INAUGURATION

The Robinsons Supermarket Corp. (RSC) opened a new store format that caters to everyday needs of the residents of Libis and other nearby cities and those working in the area. Called Robinsons Choice, the new neighborhood supermarket located at the ground floor of Olympic Heights Tower II in Eastwood City in Libis, offers more than just the usual grocery items. It houses sections devoted to fresh produce, ready-to-go meals and salad, freshly baked bread, cakes and cookies, whole roasted chicken, a special corner for fresh flower picks, and a pharmacy for basic medical needs at affordable prices. The unique concept also incorporates a coffee shop—Coffee Experience—where shoppers can sip and enjoy their favorite coffee brew after buying groceries. At the inauguration were Robina Gokongwei-Pe, RSC CEO; Faith Gokongwei-Ong, RSC AVP for purchasing; Ernesto Masenon, Nestle Philippines national sales manager; Johnson Robert Go, JG Summit Holdings FVP; Elizabeth Gokongwei; Howard Belton, Unilever Philippines CEO and chair; Andrew Tan, Megaworld Corp CEO and chair, and Johnip Cua, P&G president and GM.

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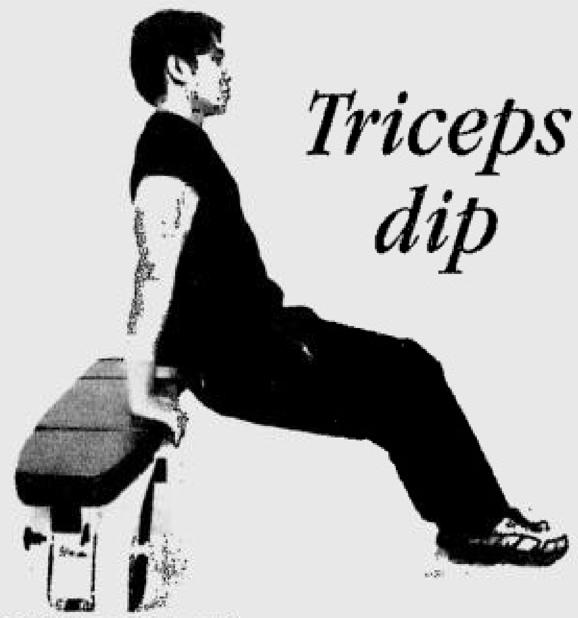
Fitness

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Triceps dip

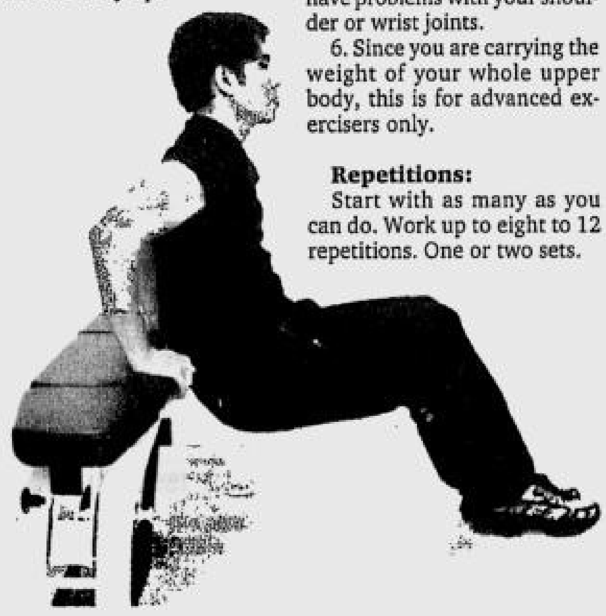


TRICEPS (back of the arm).

Equipment:
Bench, chair or firm bed

Exercise technique:

1. Place your hands on the edge of a bench, chair or firm bed behind you.
2. Keep your arms close to your body with your knuckles pointing straight ahead.
3. Bend your knees so your thighs and lower legs form slightly more than a 90-degree angle.
4. Bend your elbows and slowly lower your body.
5. Straighten the elbows to raise the body up.



Performance tips:

1. Start with the elbows straight but not locked.
2. Don't allow the elbows to flare out to the sides as you lower and raise the body.
3. Don't allow your chest and ribs to collapse as you lower your body down.
4. Don't use your legs and feet to push your body upward. The farther your body is from the bench, the longer and heavier your body becomes and the harder the triceps have to work. If you need to lighten the load, keep your body close to the bench.
5. Avoid this exercise if you have problems with your shoulder or wrist joints.
6. Since you are carrying the weight of your whole upper body, this is for advanced exercisers only.

Repetitions:
Start with as many as you can do. Work up to eight to 12 repetitions. One or two sets.

How you burn calories depends on your genes

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Aboitiz Juan

HAVE you ever wondered why some people can eat whatever they want and not gain an ounce? I know I have. Not being one of "those" people, I have to work hard at maintaining my weight. That means I have to exercise five times a week and I have to watch what I eat.

Now that I am older and more mature I have accepted the cards that life has dealt me. I have made exercise and good nutrition a permanent part of my lifestyle.

However, when I was younger, I would throw myself a pity party and whine about why I couldn't be like my slimmer friends who didn't have to work as hard as I did to control my weight. I wondered what magic ingredient their bodies contained. It was obvious there was a distinct difference in the way they burned their calories compared to the way I did. I thought, "Life isn't fair."

Well, it turns out that life really is not fair. The major reason some people can merrily go through life eating whatever they want is genetics. Here are some theories to explain why you should blame your parents if you gain weight just by looking at a piece of cake.

Genetic factors

A famous landmark study by Dr. Claude Bouchard in 1990 involving twins showed that weight gain appears to be influenced by genetic factors. Twelve pairs of lean young male twins were fed 1,000 extra calories for 100 days. Theoretically, they should have all gained the same amount of weight—approximately 29 pounds since it takes 3,500 calories to make one pound of fat. Instead, each twin pair gained almost exactly the same weight in the same place (upper bodies, abdomen, legs, etc.) but there was a nine to 29-pound difference between the pairs.

> Here are some theories to explain why you should blame your parents if you gain weight just by looking at a piece of cake

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Metabolism

Your body lives on energy (measured in terms of calories) from the food you eat. The rate or speed at which you burn these calories is called metabolism. Your body needs a certain amount of calories for "general housekeeping duties" such as breathing, heart pumping, cell repair, etc. This is called your resting metabolic rate or RMR. You burn these calories even if you are just lying still for 24 hours.

Dr. Eric Ravussin, Ph.D., and his associate, Dr. Pietro Tataranni, are experts in the field of metabolism. Dr. Ravussin put people inside a "calorie-measuring" room that measured how many calories people consumed by analyzing their breath. The room contained motion detectors to monitor how much movement they made. Ravussin discovered that the tendency to have a slow or fast metabolism runs in families. Members of the same family tended to have the same metabolic rate.

Ravussin also measured the RMR of people by making them lie down for 40 minutes without moving. He found that people with the same weight, height and body shape could burn different amounts of energy each day. He found ranges of 1,067-3,015 calories per day.

What accounts for such a wide range of difference? One explanation is body composition. Your body can be divided into "fat mass" and "lean body mass" (also called "fat-free mass"). Lean mass is everything in your body that is not fat—muscle, bones, blood, organs, skin, hair, teeth, etc. Lean mass is highly metabolic meaning it requires many calories to maintain itself.

Your internal organs like your brain, kidneys and liver are working nonstop and need fuel to keep going. Muscles, including the

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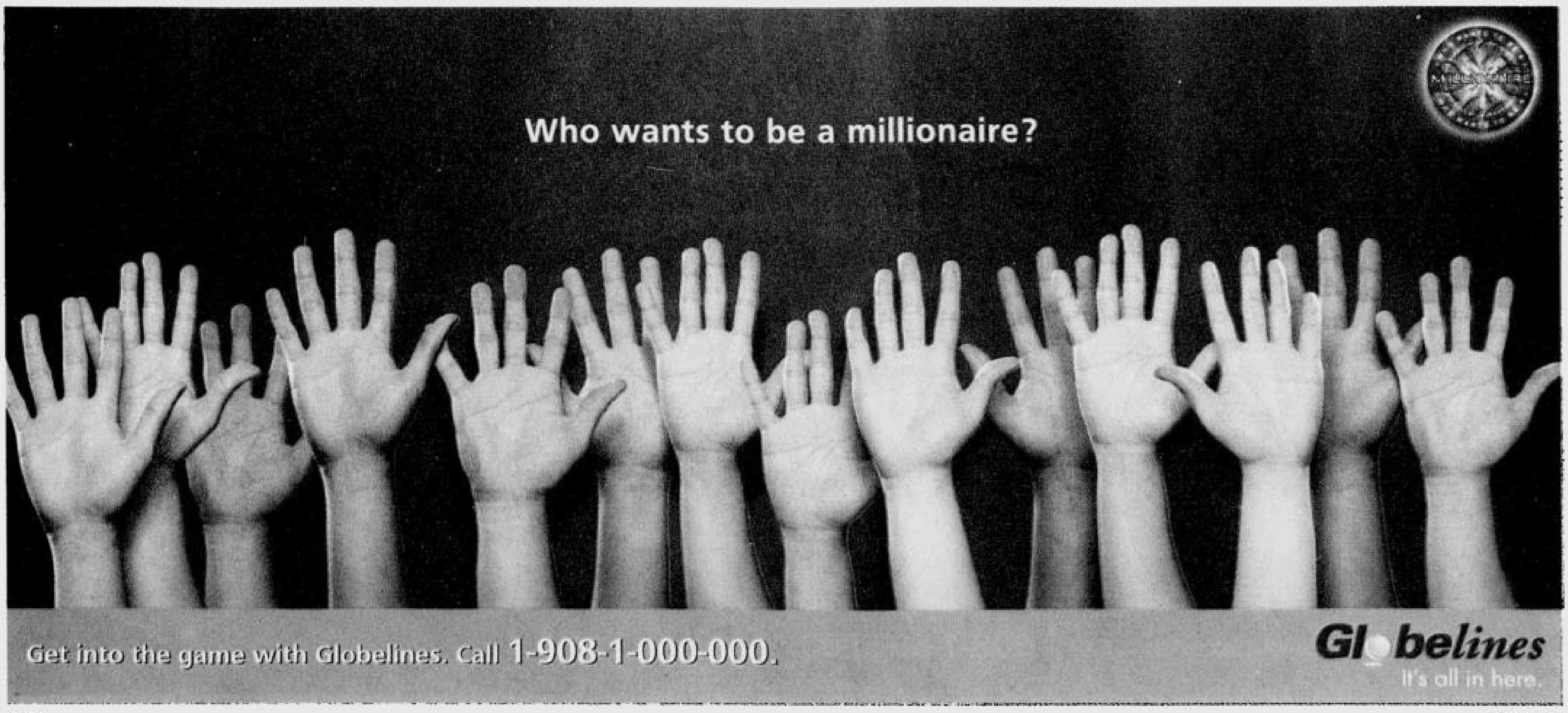

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Procter & Gamble recently launched the New and Improved Whisper feminine pads in three variants: light-to-regular flow (pack of 10), regular flow (5), and heavy flow and overnights (8). They have a new dual "quicksorb" layer that quickly absorbs liquid, a new core bonding technology that makes the pad stay in place without bunching, and a unique packaging that indicates the correct type of pad for every consumer's needs. Available in leading supermarkets and stores nationwide.

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Amargozin Ampalaya capsules can be taken initially at one to three capsules daily, with the dose adjusted depending on blood sugar levels. It is available in drugstores and health chains nationwide.

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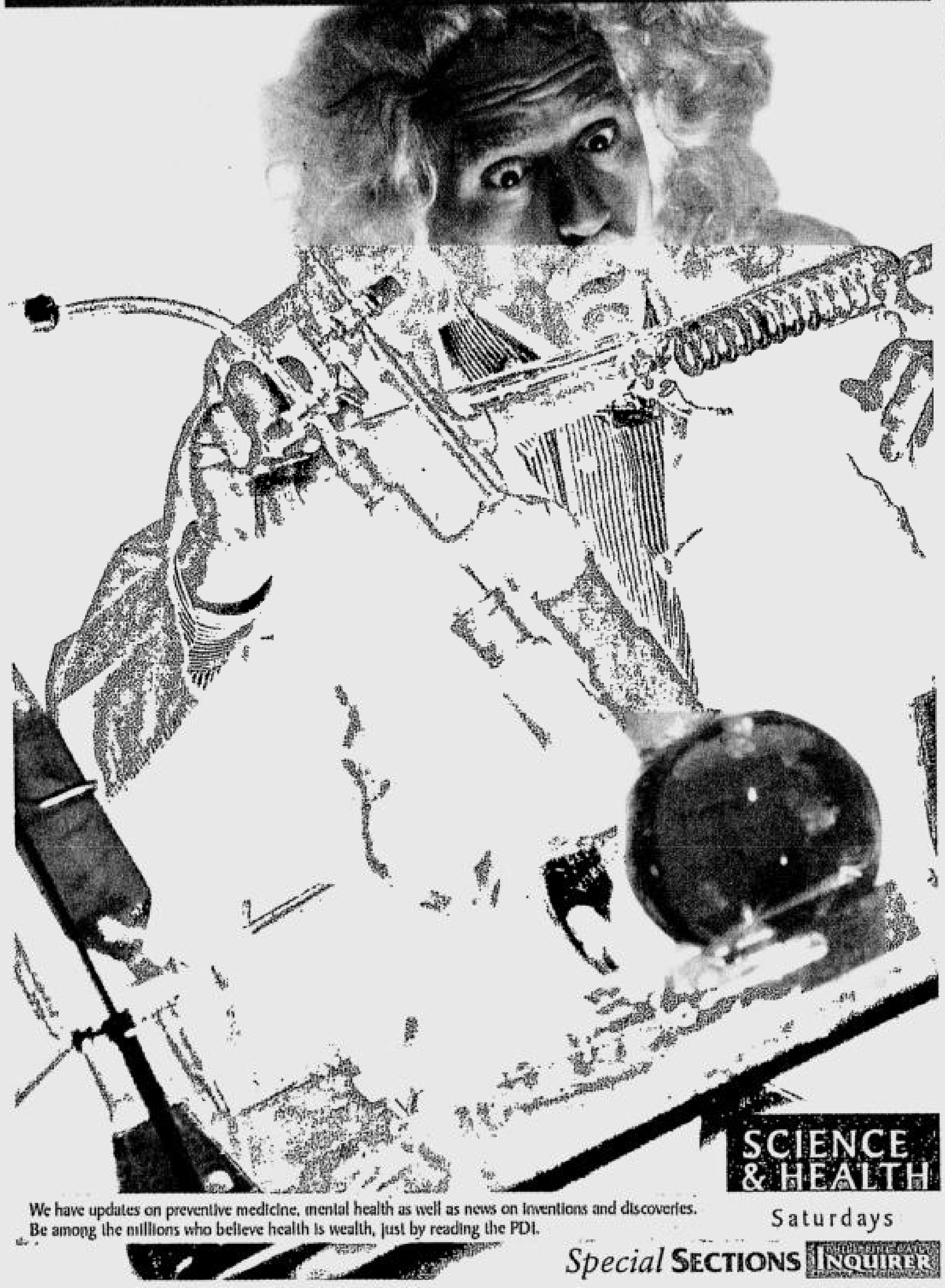

SCIENCE & HEALTH

Saturdays

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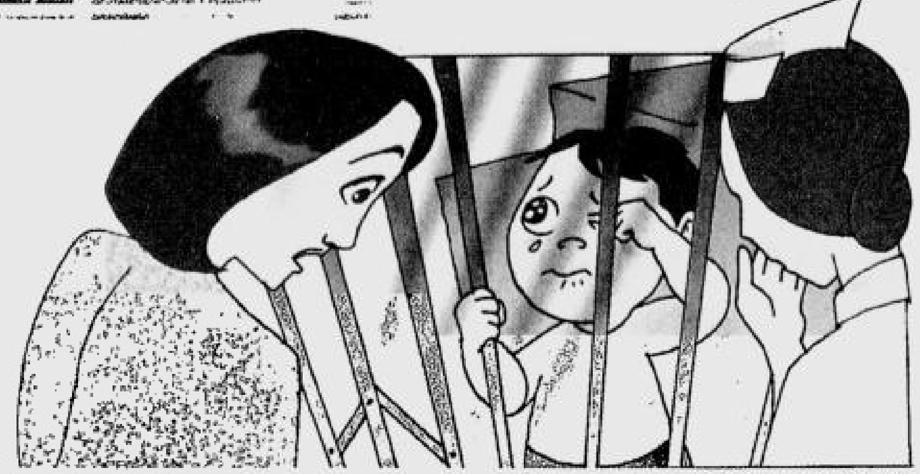

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Now you see him, now you don't

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

A boy finds himself inside a locked storeroom after following a mysterious boy. Is this a case of teleportation?

IS it possible for a boy to enter a locked and abandoned storeroom with iron bars without opening the lock?

Here's a letter from Gil P. Nuñez of Marinduque relating such a strange event that happened recently in their provincial hospital.

"A worried mother approached the head nurse of the hospital because her son, whom she asked to buy food from the canteen, failed to return after a long time. They searched the whole compound of the hospital until they found the boy crying inside a locked storeroom with iron bars. According to the head nurse, that storeroom had long been abandoned and had been kept locked all the time.

"What they wondered about was how the boy managed to enter the locked storeroom, since the iron bars were not wide enough for him to squeeze through.

"According to the boy, he followed another boy until both of them entered an opening on one side of the storeroom. When the boy he was following disappeared, he found himself inside the storeroom and he could no longer get out."

Mr. Nuñez then asked the following questions:

- "What was the process used in this case? Did the missing boy use will power to enter the iron bars?
- "Or did the mysterious boy use a special power to disintegrate the physical body of the missing boy and then reconstitute it inside the room?
- "Or did the mysterious boy raise the rate of vibration of the physical body of the missing boy so that it could pass through the iron bars on the molecular level?

"In that high rate of vibration, the etheric world became real for the boy, so that an opening was seen by him. When the rate of vibration returned to normal, the mysterious boy disappeared, together with the opening on the side of the wall through which they had entered."

Teleportation

I think what happened here is a case of "teleportation," whereby a person disappears physically in one place and appears in another. No one has yet been able to explain the mechanics or process of teleportation.

Quantum physics speaks of sub-atomic particles that disappear from their orbits and simultaneously appear in another. How this happens is still a mystery to scientists.

However, there are a number of documented cases of teleportation around the world, which shows its reality as a paranormal phenomenon.

What I think happened in the above case is that the mysterious boy was a "nature spirit" or "elemental." They are known to be able to make people, especially children, disappear from one place and appear in another. It is said the children whom they like are taken to their kingdom and are returned later to the physical world.

For example, I have been told that the late world-famous Filipino spiritual healer, Tony Agpaoa, when he was still a 3- or 4-year-old baby would suddenly disappear from his bed late at night. Next morning, his parents would find him sleeping on top of a big *caimito* tree outside their house.

One evening, the parents of Tony decided to watch the child all evening. Suddenly, Tony disappeared before their very eyes! When the parents looked up the *caimito* tree, he was there again. It was believed that the elves took a liking for him and brought him to their kingdom at night.

Possessed by elves

A similar case of teleportation happened several years ago to a high school student in a Catholic school south of Manila. The school authorities decided to build another building on campus. The place happened to be the entry point of the elves to their kingdom. Several students were possessed by the elves and were given the message not to have the building built on that spot. The priests did not believe this. The possession continued until we were called in by the principal to help them figure out a solution to this problem.

The five students who were possessed by the nature spirits were brought by the priest to the chapel of the school to pray. But when they were inside the chapel, one of the students disappeared, only four were inside the chapel. They looked for the missing girl all over the church but they could not find her. After a short while, somebody came running to the church and told the priest that the missing girl was found crying in the football field of the school. How she got there she couldn't tell.

Such incidents are usually dismissed as coincidence or an aberration of nature because we can't explain them rationally or scientifically. But there are many strange phenomena that cannot be explained by science. This does not mean they do not happen.

I believe, however, that the science of quantum physics will someday be able to shed light not only on teleportation but also telepathy, telekinesis and other so-called "anomalies" of nature.

E-mail the author at jlicauco@geocities.com. Visit www.angelfire.com/journal/licauco

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Reebok Core Board

CORE OF THE MATTER
The Reebok Core Training Program, currently being used by LA Lakers star center Shaquille O'Neal, New England Patriots linebacker Chris Slade and US national soccer team co-captain Julie Foudy, pivots on the Reebok Core Board. The first exercise board offering 3D action that tilts, twists, torques and recoils with the body's movements, the Reebok Core Board forces the user to adjust, hold a position, balance and fire their inner core muscles. It comes with an instructional video and is now available at Royal Sporting House outlets in Glorietta 4, Robinsons Ermita, Festival Mall, Isetann-Recto, Ayala in Cebu and The Shoe Shop at Rockwell and Shangri-La. Call 840-3282.

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RUDY PROJECT.
UDY P

PROJECT REPORT
Triathlete Chris Aldeguer (left) joins the list of elite sports personalities endorsing the Italian-made eyewear Rudy Project. The sports brand has agreed to sponsor the apparel and gear equipment of Aldeguer in a recent meeting with Gabrielle Boschi (right), president of Rudy Project Phils. Rudy Project is available at Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati.

How you burn calories . . .

From page C1

heart, are also "calorie-hungry." People with a higher lean body mass or more muscle mass will have a faster metabolic rate. Researchers at Tufts University in Boston have found a significant similarity in lean body mass, especially muscle, in members of the same families, implying that there is a genetic component involved.

The 'fidget' factor

In the calorie-measuring room experiment, Ravussin discovered that people have different "fidget" levels. Fidgeting is spontaneous physical activity or movement made without thinking. Examples of fidgeting are twirling your hair as you talk on the telephone or jiggling your leg as you work at your desk.

He discovered that there are big differences in the way people perform an everyday activity, such as watching TV. Some people sat as still as statues without moving a muscle. Others couldn't stop from changing position every so often. Others kept getting up and moving around the room. Ravussin calculated that fidgeting alone could burn anywhere from 300-800 calories a day. He found that the tendency to fidget or to be restless also ran in families.

Nervous energy

We are talking here about the high-strung, "hyper," tense or nervous person. The one who makes you anxious just being around him/her. Ravussin theorized that since nerves control things like muscle tension, breathing and heart rate, people whose nerves are running at a higher level than everyone else's will burn more calories even when they are forced to lie still.

In the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, researchers James Lavin and Norman Eberhardt fed 16 normal weight men and women an extra 1,000 calories for two months. The participants refrained from exercising. The weight gain ranged from 2-16 pounds. The researchers found that the ones who were the most nervous and "hyper" gained the least.

Body heat

Another explanation for calories that just seem to vanish into thin air is called "facultative thermogenesis" or heat production not related to resting metabolic rate. It seems that some people are "efficient" (from a survival standpoint) calorie burners and store most excess calories as fat or fuel for the future. Others are "inefficient" calorie burners and "waste" the excess calories as body heat.

No one can fully explain the mechanism behind this. Some think it is related to the "brown fat theory." Brown fat is a special kind of fat that helps regulate body temperature. How much brown fat you have depends again on your genes. Judith Wurtman of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology found that the more obese the person, the less active the brown fat cells were. However, she also noted that exercise increases brown fat activity.

A related theory is that heat is always escaping from the core of your body through your skin out to the environment. People who are tall, lean and lanky have more skin surface area than people who are short and stocky, and thus burn more calories because more heat is escaping through their skin.

'Fat' genes no excuse not to exercise and eat properly

In the movie "Shallow Hal," Gwyneth Paltrow plays an obese young woman. In the beginning of the movie, her character says she has tried all kinds of methods to lose weight but nothing happens so she has given up trying and just eats whatever she wants.

I know there are many overweight people who think this way. This is a dangerous attitude because exercising and eating properly are not just for losing weight. Everyone needs to exercise and eat correctly to prevent heart disease, hypertension, stroke, osteoporosis, diabetes (type 2) and many more diseases that are a result of an unhealthy lifestyle.

On the other hand, being thin does not automatically equal fit and healthy. Eating junk food and not exercising can cause a thin person to fall prey to the same diseases.

* * *

The Association of Fitness Professionals of the Phils. (AFPP) will hold the Baguio Fit Tour on March 22-24. The tour includes a two-day Basic Instructor Course to be held on Friday and Saturday at NEAP Building, Teacher's Camp, Leonard Wood Road, and a one-day Fitness Workshop on Sunday at Teacher's Camp Library. Call Susan Sanidad at (074) 444-9798 (e-mail isanidad@bgo.csi.com.ph) or Ellen Jereza at 471-9947.

For inquiries or past articles and exercises, visit www.tinajuanfitness.com

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Take Charge Doc!

Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.

Looking to learn more about your benefits under your MEDICard coverage? Do you want to be clear on the procedures, which allow you to avail of MEDICard's services? Get your information straight from MEDICard's Medical Director, DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA every Tuesday.

FAQs (frequently asked questions)

A friend of mine recently underwent Lithotripsy for renal stones. What is this procedure, how does it differ from conventional surgery and is it included in our program?

Lithotripsy, also known as Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripsy (ESWL), is a non-invasive procedure that helps your body rid itself of kidney stones. It is a method of crushing the *"stones"* while it is still inside the body, without any surgical incision. A carefully directed shock wave is passed harmlessly through the body, hitting the stone and shattering it into very fine sand-like particles that then pass out easily through the urinary tract. The procedure offers patients much shorter recovery time and less pain than those requiring surgery. Lithotripsy under our standard program is covered up to P 20,000 per year and for large group and corporate accounts may be as high as the maximum dreaded disease limit. All are however, subject to pre-existing conditions coverage.

Meet your MEDICard Team

Internist **Dr. Maria Carla D. Sibulo** has been a member of MEDICard's top notch medical service providers since 1997. Dr. Sibulo graduated in Medicine from the University of Santo Tomas. She earned her training for her specialization in Internal Medicine from the National Kidney Institute and her subspecialty training for Gastroenterology from UP-PGH. She is a Fellow to the Philippine College of Physicians and the Philippine Society of Gastroenterology. She is also the current Vice President of the Philippine Society of Digestive Endoscopy. Doc Carla is married to plastic and reconstructive Surgeon Dr. Jose Melvin Sibulo with whom she has two wonderful children, Paolo and Patrick. For your consultation needs, you may visit her at her clinic in Medical City General Hospital, room 505 every Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 11 AM to 2 in the afternoon.

Dr. Jose S. Matillac Jr. recently joined MEDICard's roster of medical service providers. He is based in Davao Doctors Hospital and specializes in General Surgery. Dr. Matillac finished Medicine at the University of Sto. Tomas and earned his training for his specialization in Davao Medical Center. He subspecializes in Pediatric Surgery where he received his training from the Philippine Children's Medical Center. Doc Jose is also a fitness buff and is a lover of dogs. Drop by his clinic for your consultation needs at the Davao Doctors Hospital from Mondays to Saturdays, 9 AM to 12 noon and again from 3 to 5 in the afternoon.

Dr. Maria Grace M. Calingasan-Guidote has been a part of MEDICard since her accreditation in 1999. Dr. Guidote is a 1980 graduate of General Dentistry from Centro Escolar University in Manila. From 1992 to 1996, she pursued training for her specialization in Cosmetic and Implant Dentistry. She is the former President of the Philippine Women Dental Foundation and is an Affiliate Consultant to St. Luke's Medical Center-Dental Staff. Doc Grace spends most of her free time with her husband Enrique and their children Joan and Erica Grace. She frequently attends training seminars to continue to harness her skills as a dental professional. You may visit her for your dental needs at room 808, the South Tower of the Cathedral Height Bldg. Complex, St. Luke's Medical Center from Mondays to Saturdays, 9 AM to 6 in the evening.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com

For individual or family membership inquiries, please call 818-2161 and look for Ms. Joy Mendiola. For group or corporate membership, please call 817-5136, 817-4985 or 817-5127 and look for a membership consultant.

TEXT MEDICard for your queries: 0917-7518365 (Globe) or 0919-2476240 (Smart). Please don't forget to include your complete name and landline number where MEDICard could reach you. *Log on to www.medicardphils.com*

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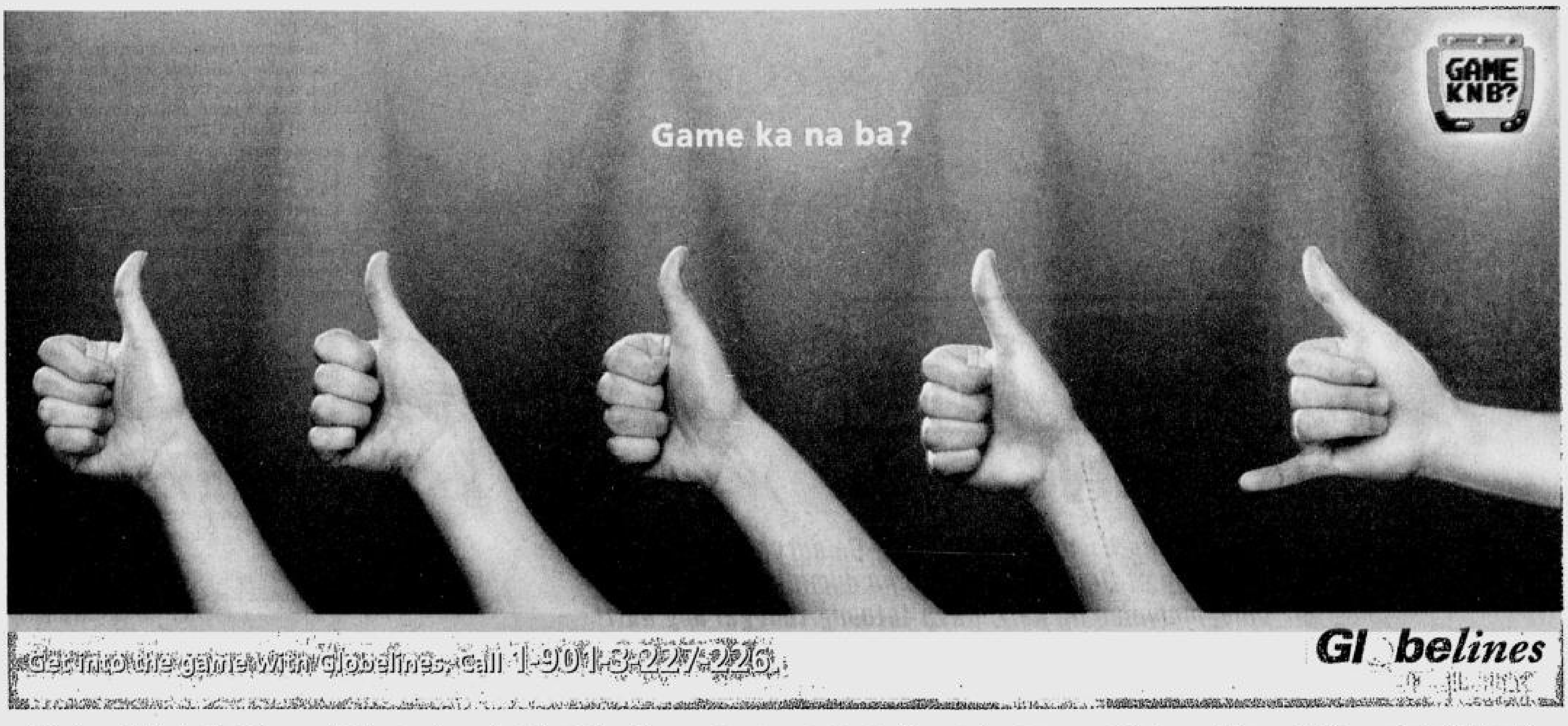

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Clean out your mind and body

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

A WISE man once said: If you surround yourself with litter, your mind is just as littered."

Cleanliness isn't just a hygienic practice, it is a virtue. But litter comes in many forms.

There is such a thing as mental garbage. This consists of past psychological programming we all were subjected to as children. It revolves around one of the most often repeated words said to us, the word "no."

Impact of one word

Psychologists say that the big word "no" takes on larger-than-life proportions to children. It becomes a law unto itself that restricts a child's nature from adventuring boldly and bravely forward.

"No" is a negative word. It is garbage. It bears tremendous impact on our perception of the world as oppressive and hateful or challenging and loving. Mental garbage is also made up of past pain—hurts, disappointments, failures—and fueled by fear.

When garbage in our minds and hearts is allowed to pile up, it will create a serious environmental problem within us. Poison will set in, crippling our thoughts and feelings.

> Good housekeeping means doing something about the garbage so it doesn't pile up within and cripple us mentally and physically

Soon, our landscape will become so polluted that the word "yes" can no longer grow on our once fertile soil.

So, how much junk do you carry? Check out from this mental diet:

No	Yes
1. I can't do it	1. I can do it
2. I can't win	2. I can win
3. I'm sick	3. I'm well
4. I'm broke	4. The money is coming
5. I don't deserve it	5. I deserve it
6. I don't believe	6. I believe
7. I don't trust	7. I trust
8. I am unhappy	8. I am happy
9. I might fall	9. I will not fall
10. I am weak	10. I am strong
11. I am unloved	11. I am loved

Read this checklist out loud each morning before you start the day. This affirmation exercise, if done daily, ought to magically reprogram your mind into thinking more positively. You will instantly feel a "lift" and condition yourself to live your life a little more fearlessly.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Physical housekeeping

The human body is likened to a house. The master bedroom is your head and heart, the kitchen and dining room your stomach, small intestines, liver spleen and pancreas. The bathroom: your bladder, kidneys and large intestines. The windows, your lungs. If you undertake a major cleaning of your house, why not do the same for your body?

There are five ways to detox:

1. Fasting
2. Exercise
3. Water therapy
4. Massage
5. Colonics

While it would be ideal to incorporate all five ways into our lifestyle, a combination of three approaches is acceptable.

Let's talk about colonics first. A cleansing enema can unclog your system and remove toxins trapped in your colon. Great for people with colds, try this easy-to-do home remedy.

Lemon cleansing

Ingredients:
Juice of half a lemon
2 quarts of warm distilled water
Procedure:

Purchase an enema kit from any drugstore. Mix the strained lemon juice in warm water. Lubricate the rubber end of the enema nozzle up to 3-4 inches with oil or jelly. Insert into your anus gently. Keep 1/3 of the fluid inside you for 5-10 minutes. Then release. Repeat procedure in 2 or 3 installments.

You may have an enema as often as needed, but not without the supervision of your doctor. If you are apprehensive about giving yourself an enema, you may go to a colonics center or make an appointment with Dr. Omar Arabia, tel. 929-6090/93.

From now on, the expression "cleaning up your act" will take on greater significance for you—inside and out!

Love and light.

E-mail at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Course on PET applications

ST. Luke's Medical Center, with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute and the Philippine Society of Nuclear Medicine, holds a national training course on Positron Emission Tomography (PET) and Cyclotron Applications in Medicine, March 18-22 at 14/F Auditorium of St. Luke's Cathedral Heights Building Complex, QC.

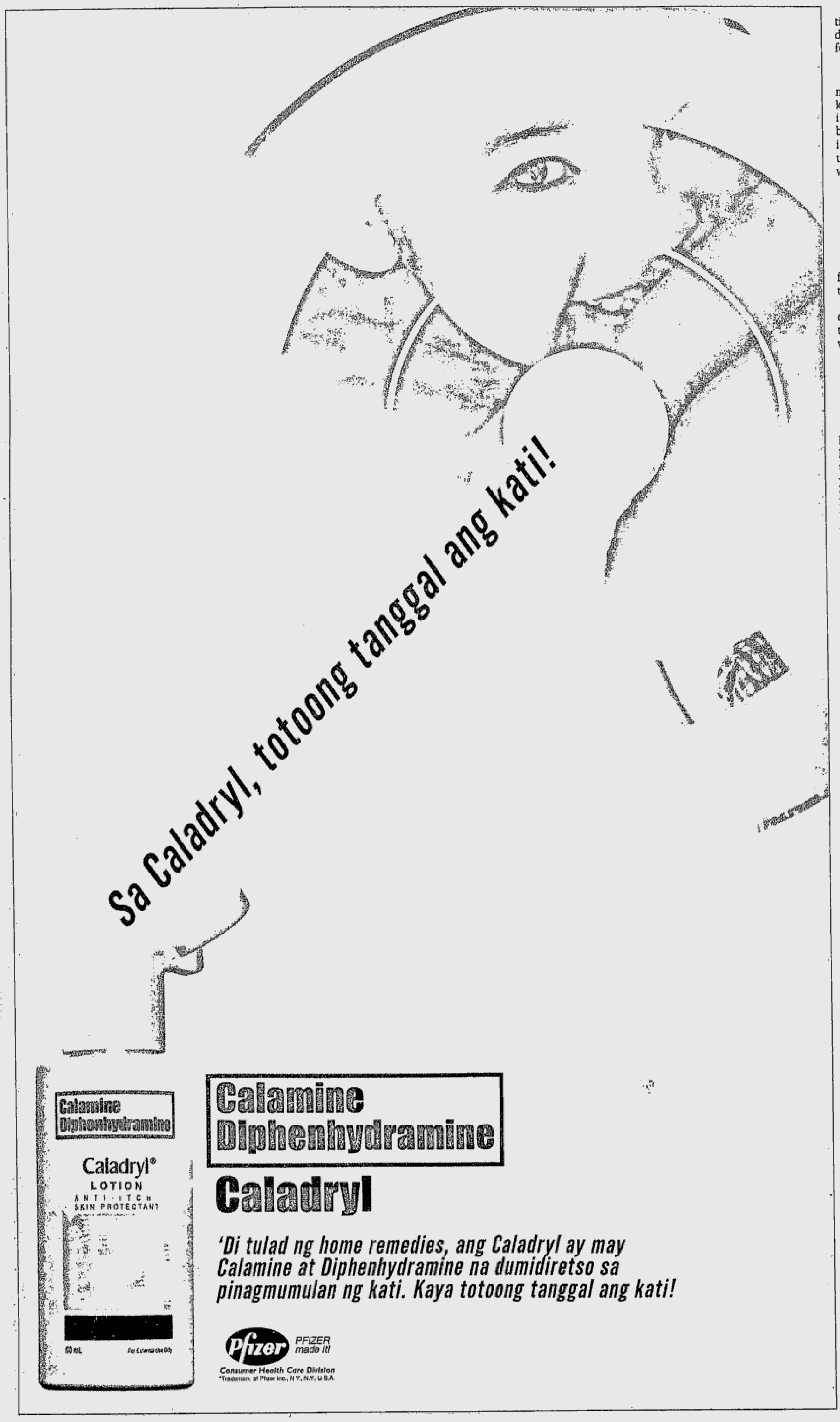
Invited international experts are Dr. Homer Macapinlac of MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas; Prof. Tatsuo Ido of Tohoku University in Japan; and Dr. Tom Nunan from United Kingdom. They will be joined by local experts headed by St. Luke's PET Center chief Dr. Jonas Santiago, Dr. Benjie Magsombol, Dr. Ponciano Jerez, Dr. Joven Cuanang and Dr. Charity Viado-Gorospe.

According to course director and St. Luke's nuclear medicine consultant Dr. Emerita Barrenechea, the training will help increase the awareness of the medical community on various applications of PET, a technologically advanced imaging field.

St. Luke's Medical Center is the first hospital in the Philippines and in Southeast Asia to have a PET scanner as well as a cyclotron. Call St. Luke's PET Center at 726-8369 and 725-6717.

Meanwhile, St. Luke's College of Medicine-William H. Quasha Memorial and St. Luke's Medical Center's Department of Surgery holds its 5th postgraduate course titled "A Comprehensive Approach in the Management of Gastroduodenal Diseases," March 21-22 at the Garden Ballroom, Edsa Shangri-La Plaza Hotel, Mandaluyong City. Invited guest speaker is acknowledged expert Dr. Michael Gregory Sarr, chair of the Division of General Gastrointestinal Surgery, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota, United States.

Registration fee for consultants is P1,200 and P700 for residents. Call St. Luke's Department of Surgery at 727-5545 and 723-0301 local 5545, or e-mail surgeryslmc@yahoo.com.



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